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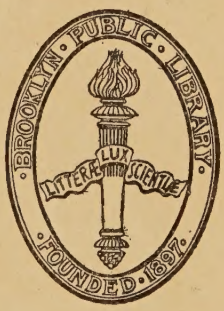

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Travels

OF

AN ARAB MERCHANT

IN SOUDAN

(THE BLACK KINGDOMS OF CENTRAL AFRICA).

I.—DARFUR.

II.—WADAÏ.

ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY

BAYLE ST. JOHN,

AUTHOR OF "VILLAGE LIFE IN EGYPT," "PURPLE TINTS OF PARIS," ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE following work is an abridgment of Dr. Perron's French version of the narrative, written in Arabic, by Sheikh Mohammed of Tunis, of his journey to two of the most remarkable Black Kingdoms of Central Africa. Dr. Perron's work, ably edited by M. Jomard of the Institute, is too voluminous to have obtained many readers in this country; but it contains so much that is interesting, so fresh and peculiar a view of manners, so many good stories and characteristic anecdotes, that I have thought it worth while to reduce it to a more popular form. The narrative bears witness itself to its own authenticity; but it is further recommended to belief by the well-known and respectable character of the writer, who is

now reposing from his many fatigues in a lucrative position, adapted to a learned man, in Cairo.*

As the narrative forms a complete autobiography, it is not necessary to say more of the author, save that he was born in 1789, and commenced his travels when a mere boy, inheriting, and always preserving, the character of a trader. All his allusions to well-known public characters and events have been examined, and found to be correct; so that it is fair to accept his testimony on other points. He travelled with peculiar advantages in countries, one of which, Darfur, has been only once visited by a European, namely, Brown, in 1793; whilst the other has never been described, except in this instance, by an eye-witness. Accurate geographical details are, of course, not to be expected from the Sheikh. He writes from memory, and from an Oriental point of view. But his descriptions of manners and the general characteristics of tribes and regions are, to all

* If the reader should wish to consult Dr. Perron's work in the British Museum, he will find the "Voyage au Darfour" under the head "Muhammad Ibn Umar," in the Old Catalogue, p. 98 *b*; and the "Voyage au Wadaï" under the same head in the New Catalogue. I believe that, after "Mehemet," it would be impossible to select a system of spelling more likely to mislead in pronunciation. The Arabic version will be found in the New Catalogue—also under Muhammad, but further on, p. 103 *a*.

appearance, accurate. They are certainly interesting. The reader is introduced at the very first page within the circle of Eastern life, and learns by degrees to view facts, if not with Eastern eyes, at least without the prejudices of an outside observer.

The countries described, though isolated both by position and policy, are sufficiently remarkable not to deserve utter neglect. They form part of the great system of states — black in population, but Mohammedan in religion — which stretches like a belt across Central Africa, with unexplored expanses of Paganism to the south, and to the north a desert, dotted with oases, and marked with caravan tracks leading to the Mediterranean. The valley of the Nile, which seems destined by Nature to be the highroad to this region, is rendered comparatively useless for that purpose by the restrictive regulations of Darfur. That cautious little kingdom stops the way. It is so fearful of aggression from Egypt — not entirely without cause — that it will not allow the easiest routes to be used, and compels all caravans to reach its frontiers exhausted by a two months' march across the desert from Siout.

The expedition sent by her Majesty's government, under the late Mr. Richardson — which already counts two martyrs — will have vastly enlarged

our knowledge of the largest, most populous, and most important Central African kingdoms. Drs. Barth and Vogel are still making gallant geographical forays towards the south—creating, as it were, ground under their feet—for unexplored countries must be considered as scientifically non-existing; whilst Mr. Petermann records their triumphs, as they are won, with a pride which must soften opposition and disarm criticism. His Atlas, however it may be modified by subsequent exploration, is so far the best and completest portraiture of Central Africa that we possess.

It is not probable, however, that the German travellers will be able or willing to penetrate eastward across the kingdoms described in this Volume, although Mr. Richardson had contemplated such a journey, and had communicated, through government, with the English Consul-General in Egypt, that the way might, to a certain extent, be prepared. I believe it is still the practice, if not the rule, in Darfur, to prevent all strangers who penetrate into the interior of the kingdom from going away again. However, strong representations from Egypt might have obviated this difficulty. At present we cannot expect the experiment to be tried, as Dr. Barth seems to be directing his attention to a still more

difficult expedition; and it is extremely probable that for many years to come the information contained in the present Volume will not be superseded.

The Sheikh, in the course of his narrative, affords us a good deal of information, which applies equally well to the present day, on the state of slavery in the parts of Africa he visited. According to his unconscious representation, the Mohammedan states which have formed on the northern limits of Negro-land have used the superior power they have acquired from semi-civilisation as a means of preying on their savage brethren. In England, forests have been said to be excrescences of the earth given by God to men to pay their debts withal. In Africa, the princes and great people regard their fellow-creatures in the same light. This is, perhaps, the chief reason why those countries, in spite of their natural advantages, remain in their present backward state. There seems to be only one way to induce them to abandon their man-hunting propensities, — namely, the development of regular commerce; and there is ground for hoping that the progress of discovery may lead to occasions of intercourse, and to the signing of treaties which may cease some day to be mere inoperative documents. When we can safely get at Central Africa,

and discover some means of obtaining its productions to meet a regular demand, it will be easy to divert its population from what will then be the unprofitable employment of stealing one another. It is on this ground that the exploration of its water-outlets towards the Atlantic is so important.

Darfur and Wadaï, however, belong to Eastern Africa, the proper approach to which is the Nile. If a regular government were established in Egypt, exercising its authority firmly over the southern provinces that now, for all practical purposes, are but nominally subject, commerce would soon begin to flow in its natural channel, and merchandise, which is now principally brought across the desert, would be directed to the nearest point upon the Nile, which would be soon laden with fleets of boats dropping down with the current. There are the elements of an empire more important than Hindustan between Alexandria and the fourth parallel of North Latitude.

BAYLE ST. JOHN.

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TRAVELS OF AN ARAB MERCHANT,

&c.

PART I.—DARFUR.

CHAPTER I.

Parentage of the Sheikh—His Grandfather starts on a Pilgrimage—Adventures—Mekka—Jeddah—A Man from Sennaar—Departure for that Country—Reception—Fate of his Family—Omar—His Pilgrimage—A Meeting in the Desert—A Rendezvous—Omar is deceived by his Father—Journeys to Sennaar—A Quarrel—He returns towards Egypt—The Desert—Return to Tunis—Birth of the Sheikh—His Father settles in Egypt—Goes again to Sennaar—The Sheikh at Cairo—Ahmed-el-Bedawee—Preparations for Journey to Darfur—Departure.

My father, says the pious Sheikh Mohammed of Tunis, beginning his narrative—may God overshadow him with the clouds of his mercy and goodness!—has related to me that my great-grandfather was one of the most important personages of Tunis; that he was steward of the Sultan of Barbary, the perfect prince, the victorious king, the shereef Mohammed El-Hosny.* In the exercise of his functions

* See the Introduction for observations on the chronology of the Sheikh.

he became wealthy, and died, leaving three sons, who divided the heritage, and sold the house, which had been their first refuge, so that each remained alone with his wife and his children.

My grandfather was a man of letters, and wrote a beautiful hand. The books he copied sold for double the price of others. He had also learned the art of dyeing, and from the beginning was better off than his brothers, and better dressed than they. It happened one day that the desire came upon him to make a pilgrimage to the Sacred House, the Kaaba, and to visit the tomb of the Prophet. He sold a portion of his property, and prepared for his journey in the character of a trader, providing himself with good store of blankets and tarbooshes. Many persons also confided to him a certain quantity of merchandise, that he might trade to their advantage, for his good faith and probity were well known. He started in a vessel with a good cargo, his brothers accompanied him to the shore to bid him adieu, and a favourable wind at first accompanied him; but the weather suddenly changed, and he was driven in the direction of Rhodes, where a violent tempest overtook him. The vessel began to leak, the timbers to crack, the waves to leap over the bulwarks,—in short, they were wrecked upon the coast, and a few only escaped. Among these was my grandfather, who contrived to reach the city of Rhodes.

"Thy head," says the poet, "being saved from

destruction, wealth seems of no more value than the pairing of a nail."

Luckily the traveller had round his waist a belt full of gold, which sufficed for his expenses. He bought a stock of provisions, and, re-embarking, set sail for Alexandria. It was the season of the departure of the pilgrims to join in the great ceremonies celebrated near Mount Arafat. He set out on his journey, and having safely arrived in the Sacred Countries, performed his pious duties with all the zeal and devotion of which he was capable. But when he had fully enjoyed the happiness of saluting the Prophet and his two companions, Abou-Bekr and Omar, who are buried near him, he recovered from his bewilderment, and began to reflect on the loss of his fortune and the uncertainty of the future. He was ashamed to return to Tunis in a state of misery and distress—he who had lived there in so much comfort. How would he be received by his countrymen? Upon this he began to repeat to himself these words:—

"I will travel in the countries of the East and of the setting sun. I will win wealth, or I will die far from my country. If my soul depart from me, God will call it to himself; but if I survive, it will be easy to revisit the place of my birth."

He reflected, also, that even the Jew is honoured on account of his gold, and that the shereef is humiliated by poverty. The very dogs wag their tails at sight of a well-dressed man, but bark at those

that are in rags. In consequence of these reflections, my grandfather left Mekka, and went to reside at Jeddah, where he gained his living by copying manuscripts. In the course of time he formed an acquaintance with some people from Sennaar, one of whom became his intimate friend. Now, this man said to him one day :—

"From what country art thou ?"

He replied—"I am from Tunis."

"And how does it happen that thou hast come to live at Jeddah ?"

Then my grandfather related to him the history of his misfortunes.

"Why shouldst thou not make up thy mind," said the man from Sennaar, "to come with us to our city ? Thou wilt find there honour and well-being. Our mek (king) is a man with an open hand, caring neither for gold nor for silver, loving merit, and honouring shereefs. I answer for it, he will revive thy fortunes, and bestow upon thee riches, honours, slaves, and camels."

So my grandfather allowed himself to be persuaded, and, setting out, arrived in safety at Sennaar, and was presented to the mek in these words :—

"This man is a learned man from a foreign country ; his ship was destroyed upon the seas, and he has lost all he possessed."

The mek received my grandfather with hospitality, saying, "Be welcome!"—and treated him with great deference, giving him a lodging and abundant presents.

Among these presents was a young girl of charming aspect, and of great price, named Halymah. Fascinated by her beauty, my father took her as his concubine, and had by her a son and a daughter, as beautiful as their mother. The king, moreover, assigned to him a fixed income; so that he utterly forgot his family, which had remained in Tunis, and the three young children he had left under the charge of their mother.

Now, of these children, my late uncle, named Mohammed, was about that time nine years old; the second—may God save his soul!—was called Omar, and was six years old—this was my father; the third, Mohammed Tahir, was three years old. They were all placed under the guardianship of their maternal uncle, Seyd Ahmed, son of the learned Sulieman-el-Azhary. This was a man of high character and immense learning, author of many esteemed books. On account of his great knowledge of theology, the functions of Kady of Tunis had been offered to him, but he had refused. He occupied himself in giving lessons, at first in a college, but afterwards—on account of ill-health—in his own house, where all the great people came to listen to his lectures.

My father remained with him until he came to man's estate, and profited much by his instruction. But, then, the desire moved him to perform the pilgrimage, and he laid the subject before his uncle, who was at once stirred by the same laudable wish,

and gave up his lectures and prepared for departure. They embarked and proceeded to Alexandria, and thence to Cairo; and afterwards started for Cosseir, some months before the season of the pilgrimage. As they were crossing the desert, they beheld approaching another caravan, composed of Magrebyns, coming from Sennaar. When they drew nigh they began to shout out questions one to the other; and those coming from Sennaar cried,—

"Ho! ho! is there any one amongst you from Tunis?"

"Yes," replied my father, "we are from Tunis."

"Do you know one Ahmed, son of Suleiman?"

"Yes," said my father; "and who art thou?"

"I am his brother-in-law. I left Tunis a long time ago—my children and all my family—and I know not whether they are dead or alive."

Now the uncle of my father was under a kind of palanquin, covered with cloth; but had overheard this conversation.

"Omar," said he, "go and salute thy father. It is he; and tell him I am here."

So Omar jumped off his camel, and, running to his father, kissed his hand, and told him that the brother of his wife was under the palanquin.

My grandfather hastened and saluted the son of Suleiman, and when they were somewhat tranquillised, Omar said to his father,—

"How comes it that thou hast left us so long,

without any resource, young as we are? If God had not awakened the bounty of my uncle, we should have been lost."

My grandfather explained that he had been the victim of destiny, and quoted the words of a poet in support of his statement.

"But," said my father, "art thou now thinking of returning to our country, and of refreshing the eyes of thy family?"

"I will return, if it please God."

"And when?"

"I am now going to Cairo to sell my female slaves. Then I shall return to Sennaar, to take my children and whatever I possess; and afterwards I shall set out for Egypt. Go thou upon the pilgrimage, and we shall meet again at Cairo. Whoever arrives first shall wait for the other."

So they said, "Adieu!" and the two caravans separated in the desert. My father and his uncle went upon their pilgrimage, and my grandfather continued his journey to Cairo, where he sold his slaves, and, having made his purchases, returned to his adopted country. Meanwhile the pilgrims arrived at the holy city, and performed their pious duties; but the elder of them died, and was buried near the gate of Mala. So Omar returned alone to Cairo, and, whilst waiting for his father, attended on the scientific lectures in the mosque of El-Azhar. But he waited in vain; his father came not; and,

in his impatience, he started with a caravan which was returning direct to Sennaar.

Having arrived in that country, he found his father comfortably settled, surrounded by his wives and children, and having no thoughts of departure. He asked him why he had broken his promise, and had laughed at him. My grandfather gave an evasive answer, to the effect that his debtors would not pay him, and persuaded Omar to wait six months longer. A caravan then preparing to depart for Egypt, Omar said,—

"My father! wilt thou come along with us, or shall I go away alone?"

"Neither the one nor the other. It is not convenient for me to go to Tunis, where I owe money. Besides, I have learned that thy mother has married again. As for thy departure, put it off; thou must be provided for that purpose with slaves, camels, gold, and merchandise."

My father refused to remain any longer, saying: "I wish to become learned, and all the time I spend here is pure loss."

Upon this they quarrelled, and my father went away in anger with the caravan, not possessing a single para. But three days afterwards, my grandfather came riding after him, and gave him three camels, four young slave-girls, two black slaves, provisions and water-skins, and a camel-load of gum. My father received the whole, and continued his

journey with the caravan; but some time afterwards they strayed from the track and lost their way. Thirst made itself felt, the passage of the desert was prolonged, and the slave-girls and the camels which had been given to my father died, so that he became as poor as before. Well has a poet said, that when Fortune is willing to follow you can lead her with a hair, but when she wishes to turn away, she can break chains of iron.

Heaven, however, had not determined that my father should remain in an extremity of distress. The chief of the caravan became ill, and nobody knew a means of cure. His disease was a brain fever; but my father wrote a passage from the Koran on a piece of paper, and gave it to the sick man, who, with profound faith, placed it upon his head and was instantly cured. In gratitude, the chief of the caravan gave my father a camel to ride on, and placed his bales of gum upon another, so that he arrived in safety at Cairo, and sold his merchandise with a good profit. This done, he again entered the mosque of El-Azhar, and shortly afterwards married my mother. After two years of marriage, he had a son whom he called Ahmed, but who died when he was fifteen months old. He consoled himself by repeating the verses of the poet: "Dear child, star of the heaven, how short was thy time! thou wert like the stars of the last hour of the night!"

Soon afterwards my father started for Tunis,

taking with him his wife and mother-in-law, and was received by his brother, Mohammed, who had become a tarboosh-manufacturer. Five months afterwards I was born. It was on a Friday, three hours after the setting of the sun, in the middle of the month of Zou-l-Kadeh, in the year 1204 (1789). Three years afterwards my father, having quarrelled with his brothers, returned to Egypt, and became a humble functionary in the mosque of El-Azhar. Four years afterwards he received a letter from his half-brother, in Sennaar, to this effect: "Our father has gone to the dwelling of pardon of the very high God. He left behind him a great number of books, which have been stolen from us by a certain Ahmed, of Benzareh in the States of Tunis, whom we had received into our house. We are in a condition that rejoices our enemies and afflicts our friends. On the receipt of this letter depart, we pray thee, immediately for this place, and take us with thee. We live as you live. Salutation."

On reading this letter my father wept, and pitied the misery of his brother and his sister. He determined at once to go and fetch them. I was then seven years old. I had already read the whole of the Koran once, and was reading it a second time, having come to the end of the chapter on the family of Aaron. I had a brother four years old. My father left us sufficient to live on for six months; but we remained a whole year alone. My mother was obliged to sell a great portion of our copper

utensils and of her ornaments. Then my uncle Tahir arrived at Cairo and took us under his protection. He came with the combined object of pilgrimage and trade. He had a boy as beautiful as the morning sun in a sky without clouds, named Mohammed. This boy studied with me for some time; but the plague came and he died, and was carried away to the tomb and to the delights of the Houris. My uncle, who had intended to remain some time in Cairo, was so saddened by the loss of his son, that he started immediately for the holy city, leaving me money sufficient for my expenses during four months.* But this time passed away, and I was left sometimes not knowing what to eat, and nearly naked. Meanwhile, however, I studied assiduously at the mosque of El-Azhar. One day I learned that a caravan was arriving from Soudan. It came from Darfur. I had learned a short time previously that my father had departed from Sennaar for that country with his brother. When, therefore, the caravan had entered the wakalah of the slave-merchants, I went about amongst them inquiring if any one knew whether my father was alive. After some time I chanced to fall in with one of the traders, who was a grave, respectable man, named Ahmed Bedawee. I kissed his hand and stood up before him.

* It will be observed that our Sheikh here drops all allusion to his mother, who, perhaps, to a certain extent, abandoned him. Altogether, this narrative illustrates the slightness of the family bond in the East.

"What dost thou desire, my friend?" said he to me, in a voice full of gentleness.

"I come to ask for news of some one whom you may happen to know."

"Who is he, and what is his name?"

"Omar of Tunis, a learned man."

"Thou hast addressed thyself to the right person. I am his friend; and thou, from thy face, should be his son."

"Yes, I am he;" and I related my misfortunes.

He then told me that my father was among the personages placed near the Sultan, one of the most honoured members of the divan, and offered to advance me sufficient money to enable me to set out and join him. I accepted his offer, saying that I would follow him like a shadow; so I went to visit him every day until Ahmed said to me: "We shall start to-morrow, come and pass the night with us." I did so, and next morning at early dawn we rose and pronounced the prayer of the Sabh, and prepared the baggage and placed it on the camels. The horns of the gazelle could not have been perceived in the desert at the time when our camels went away from the wakalah, swinging their burdens to and fro. We arrived at Fostat, and our beasts knelt on the banks of the Nile. We transferred our baggage to a large boat, and, having waited for the mid-day prayer—it being Friday—we started.*

* The Arabs rarely start on a journey on Friday before the mid-day prayer, it being considered unlucky.—*Perron.*

CHAPTER II.

Fostat—The Nile—Reflections—Minieh—The Mamlooks—Siout—Departure of the Caravan—The Oases—Kharjeh—Abyrys—Boulac—Maks—Arid Desert—Wells and Rivers—Musical Stones—Selineh—A Courier—Death of the King of Darfur—Natron Lakes of Zaghawy—Halt—The last Stage over the Desert—Kind Treatment of the Sheikh—Confines of Darfur—Separation of the Caravan—Congratulations of the People—Visitors—Arrival of Strangers—Zarrouk, the Sheikh's Uncle—Obligations of Ahmed-el-Bedawee to Omar of Tunis—Departure for Aboul-Joudoul—Kelkabieh—The Marrah Mountains—Meeting of Father and Son—Feast—The Sultan and his Vizier—Visit to Tendelty—Interview with Kourra.

When our boat had pushed off from the shores of Old Cairo, whilst the men were getting out the great sail, I began sadly to reflect on the dangers of the voyage I was undertaking: a warning voice seemed to speak from the depths of my heart. I trembled—disquietude overshadowed me—I was amidst the sons of a race foreign to my own; amidst men whose language I scarcely knew, whose countenances were not white, and whose miens not promising. I whispered to myself, whilst tears stood in my eyes:—"Body, garments, visage, all in them seem black to thee—black skins in black clothing." I repented me that I had been won

over by the sons of Ham. Their hatred for the sons of Shem came to my thoughts. I felt within myself an indescribable emotion, and was on the point of begging permission to return to Cairo; but the grace of God descended upon me, and I remembered all that had been said by men of learning and of science, and by the prophet, in favour of travels. If the pearl did not quit its shell, it would never be placed in a diadem; and if the moon moved not, it would ever be a crescent. So I determined to persevere. A favourable wind impelled us during the day, our kanjia moved swiftly up the stream, and at night-time we reached Minieh.*

Near this town there was a troop of those Ghouz, or Mamlouks, from whom God had just removed the cloak of power.† They seized our bark by violence. They were encamped in tents near the town, along the banks of the Nile, and were on the look-out for travellers, that they might rob them: they spoiled our chief of all his money. When we escaped from their hands we proceeded in three days to Manfaloot, and thence to Beni-Ady, where we remained until the Darfur caravan was ready to start—until it had mended its water-skins, and got together its provisions.‡

* The Sheikh had better fortune, if his memory did not betray him, than most travellers. It generally takes a good day's sail to reach as far as Benisouef.

† This was during the French occupation of Egypt.

‡ The Darfur caravan still starts from the same neighbourhood.

When the camels were at length laden we struck into the desert, and on the evening of the fifth day reached Kharjeh, the Theban oasis. This place is planted with date-trees, that surround it as the anklets surround the ankles, or as the two arms of a lover surround the neck of his mistress, on whom he sheds a kiss. These date-trees were laden with splendid dates, the aspect of which charmed our eyes, and which were exceedingly cheap. We remained there five days; but on the morning of the sixth proceeded, and, after hard travelling, on the third day reached Abyrys. This country has been ruined by the exactions of its governors; all its population, formerly so happy, is now dispersed; the date-trees are destroyed, and all the brilliance of the scenery has been tarnished.

After two days of rest we pushed on two other days to Boulac, a country also desolated, and nearly without inhabitants. Most of its houses are ruined. What surprised me was the extreme smallness of the date-trees, under which we could lie and pick the fruit with our hands. The name of Boulac recalled to me the Boulac of Cairo, and some natural tears fell from my eyes as I thought of the place where I had been brought up.

But there is little time for regret in the desert. We pushed on hastily and arrived in the evening at Maks, to which this verse may be applied: "The country has no inhabitants, except the gazelles and the caravans that traverse it." It is related that

Maks had formerly a large population, which perished by the hand of Him who destroyed the last eagle of Lockman: all the inhabitants have disappeared—not a man is left. Scarcely at present remain there a few trees, some tamarisks, and thorny bushes. We tarried there two days, and having filled our water-skins, departed.

We now entered a desert completely arid. For five days we marched through silent solitudes, over grim plains, where here and there the wandering eye could scarcely discover some stunted plants of the same colour as the ground; there was not a tree to cast a hand's-breadth of shadow. During this part of the journey we were compelled to cook our food with the dry dung of camels, which the servants collected.

On the evening of the fifth day we reached a place called Es-Shebb, situated in the midst of mountains that seemed like vast cones of sand. An unpleasant wind blew over them; but we remained there two days to rest, and then went on again for four more, until we reached the wells of Selineh, near which are the ruins of ancient buildings. It is situated at the foot of a mountain which bears the same name. We remained there two days to rest. This place is a delightful one for the traveller; but that which astonished me chiefly was that the young men of the caravan, having ascended the mountain, struck certain blocks of stone with switches, and caused them to yield a sound exactly resembling that

of a tambourine. The cause of this curious circumstance is unknown. Are there hollows in these stones, or are they placed over caverns? Glory be to God, who knows the truth! At any rate the people of the caravan told me that, on a certain night, which they specified—the night of Friday, I believe—there is heard from the mountain the playing of a tambourine, as if a marriage festival were going on. The origin of these nocturnal musical entertainments is also unknown.

On the third day we filled our water-skins, and leaving Selineh entered upon the desert, and having travelled for five whole days, during which we met a caravan of Amaim Arabs coming from the natron lakes, reached Laguyeh, where we again rested two days and departed for Zaghawy. We now met a courier, mounted on a dromedary, coming from Darfur, and announcing the death of the just and glorious prince, Sultan Abd-er-Rahman-er-Rashid, sovereign of Darfur and its dependent provinces. The courier was going to Cairo to renew the state seal, no one in that country being capable of engraving it. The caravan testified its grief at this melancholy news; all feared that some disturbance might arise in the country, for the Sultan who had just died was an equitable and generous prince, loving science and those who possessed it, and the declared enemy of ignorance.

We continued our route for five days more, when at length our camels knelt at the natron lakes of

Zaghawy. From thence to the frontiers of Darfur there are still ten days of travel, making forty days in all. We remained at this place eleven days, pasturing our beasts of burthen, in order to prepare them for the frightful desert before us. Some camels were slaughtered at this station, and their flesh was distributed to the caravan. There came to us some Bedawin Arabs of Darfur, who offered for sale camel-milk and butter. They had come to fetch salt and natron from that place.

We now sent forward a courier, mounted on a dromedary, with letters for the government, and others for the relations of the caravan folks, announcing our speedy arrival. I also wrote to my father, kissing his venerable hands, and relating how Ahmed Bedawee had cared for me. Indeed I had reason to be thankful; of all the journeys I had ever performed this was the pleasantest; for so soon as we quitted Beni-Ady my protector ordered his slaves to prepare for me a kind of tent on a quiet camel, and he himself assisted me to mount, and held the bridle until I was settled in my seat. He gave me, also, a great leathern bottle to hold water, and bade all his servitors to be at my beck and call. He had with him seven middle-aged slaves and one young one, eight hired domestics, and sixty-eight camels. With him were five concubines, and a sixth woman, who was his cousin, Sitti Jamal, of ravishing beauty. He had also a black Dongola horse, with a saddle of green velvet.

Ahmed treated me with all the kindness of a

father. When the caravan halted I used to doze away, fatigued by the swinging of the camel and the heat of the sun: he would allow me to sleep until the hour of supper arrived, when he would wake me gently and bring me water, that I might wash. At meals he guided my hand to the dish, and sometimes put the morsels into my mouth.

When we left the wells of Zaghawy we marched for ten days hastily, starting before dawn and trenching on the night. On the eleventh morning we came to Mazroob, a well situated on the confines of Darfur, and in a few hours the Arabs came down to us, bringing large skins of water and little skins full of milk. We congratulated ourselves on the happy termination of our journey, and solaced ourselves at the well during the whole of that day; but next morning we advanced, in four hours, to Souwaineh, where we met the governor of the country, with a suite of five hundred horsemen, who wished us a good journey. This was the Melik Mohammed Sanjak. In Soudan every governor bears the title of Melik, or Mek—that is to say, king.

Having rested at this place two days, we again started; but here our caravan broke up, each taking the direction of his own district. The greatest number went to Kobeih, the capital; but Ahmed, my protector, was from Sarf-el-Dajaj, or the Rivulet of Fowls. I accompanied him, and we advanced slowly for three days, and on the fourth came under

the shade of a great mountain, where was a well, on the brink of which we halted to pass the warm hours. A number of persons came here to congratulate us upon our arrival, and among others the son of my protector, with slaves and servants bearing provisions. We feasted and talked until the sun went down, and, then proceeding, arrived in an hour and a-half at Sarf-el-Dajaj.

The rest of the evening was spent in receiving a crowd of visitors; but Ahmed did not forget me, and ordered a hut to be prepared for my repose. I slept soundly, and next morning went to visit my protector, whom I found sitting gravely surrounded by his servants, his slave-women, and his children, happy, satisfied, and quiet, as if he had not just come off so long a journey. He introduced me to his relations and friends; and several days were spent by me in passing from one house to another, enjoying the festivals given to celebrate the return of the travellers.

I returned one day to my house, a little before twilight, and found there two men and two slaves. One of the two men was short, bronze-coloured, rather agreeable in aspect, and dressed with some elegance. The other was black and poorly accoutred. I sat down, suppressing my surprise at seeing a couple of strangers installed in my chamber. They made signs to one another, looking at me. Then one began to say,—

"Is this really he?"—"Certainly it is he!"

I did not know what they meant, but the bronze-coloured man said,—

"Art thou of this country?"

"No! I come from Cairo to meet my father."

"Who is thy father?"

"Omar of Tunis."

Then the black said sharply, "Salute, then, thy uncle, Ahmed Zarrouk!"

So I saluted the bronzed man, who handed to me a letter addressed to Ahmed Bedawee, in which my father paid numerous compliments to my protector, thanking him, and announcing that he had sent, as presents, two slaves of six spans in height, and a sorrel colt. When I had read this missive, the bronzed man told me to go and communicate it to Ahmed, and to take the presents with me. This I did, and my protector, having admired the slaves and the colt, said,—"Blessings! they are magnificent! I accept them, and I give them to my son—this one"—pointing to me.

Both I and my uncle pressed him to keep them, but he would not, saying,—"If I were to expend all my fortune for thy father, it would be little in comparison with the service he has rendered me."

Upon this I took courage to ask, "What was this service he so often alluded to?"

"Know, my child," said he, "that my enemies had spoken calumnies against me to his highness the

Sultan. I was accused of selling free-women; and with so much cunning and appearance of truth, that the Sultan was convinced, and exclaimed in his rage, 'A merchant of his rank, possessor of so much wealth, to behave thus! Better he were poor!' Then he called me before him, and received me with flashing eyes and contemptuous words. I begged that the charges should be examined. They refused. My words were stifled. I was seized, an iron collar was put round my neck, and they were about to throw me into a dungeon. But, thanks to the benevolent providence of God, thy father was present at this scene. Nobody had dared to intercede for me, seeing the mighty anger of the Sultan. Thy father came forward, and having coughed like one about to make a speech, pronounced certain words of the Prophet on pardon, and on the necessity of verifying accusations. Then he implored the clemency of the Sultan for me. The Sultan was moved, and ordered me to be set at liberty. My innocence was afterwards made manifest; but if, at that time, God had not roused up thy father, my life and my property would have been sacrificed. What greater service can be rendered to a man than this? God will reward it. For my part, I had long waited an opportunity to be agreeable to thy father, and I have only been able to do for him this slight kindness. Perhaps it will be counted as part payment of my debt; but I do not think so."

My uncle wished to depart on the morrow, but Ahmed would not consent, and we remained three days more. On the morning of the fourth day my protector gave me a great quantity of kharaz, or strings of beads used to ornament women's dresses in Soudan: he also gave me some others, more valuable, used as necklaces. To these he added some beads of yellow amber, and a large agate of a light red colour. All this was worth three female slaves. He presented me likewise with a new turban of green muslin, with some sunbul, sandal-wood, and other perfumes used by the Soudan ladies. "Distribute this," he said, "to thy father's wives." Afterwards he killed a sheep, and roasted it entire, as a parting meal, and having properly saluted us, allowed us to depart.

I mounted a horse, my uncle a dromedary, and the black man an ass. The slaves preceded us. We were bound for a place six days' distant, called Aboul-Joudoul, where was my father. On our way we passed Kelkabieh, the environs of which reminded me of the country places of Egypt; but the town is better built, richer, and more lively. Many foreigners are seen there. The natives are, for the most part, wealthy merchants, having great numbers of slaves, with which they trade. The district belonging to this town is vast and open, and there are great numbers of wells, the water of which rises nearly to the brim. The date-tree flourishes there, as well as abundance of vegetables: as cucumbers, vegetable

marrows, onions, fenugreek, cumin, pepper, and various other plants well known in Egypt. The sour lemon is also found.

Not far off are the mountains of Marrah, which stretch north and south from one end of Darfur nearly to the other, cutting the country into two unequal parts. This range is traversed by a series of defiles, which enable the western and eastern provinces to communicate. The true Forians inhabit these mountains, and shun the plain, where they think themselves in less security.

At Kelkabieh there was a well-frequented market, where we bought provisions and departed, proceeding three days along the mountains of Marrah, until we came to a country, the inhabitants of which, hating travellers, especially Arabs, received us very roughly. Thenceforward we passed over plains, and, having rested at Tarneh, arrived on the sixth day at Joultou, in the district of Aboul-Joudoul. Here we saw a house, at the gate of which were horses, asses, and servants. My father was receiving visitors. We entered, and a number of young black slave-girls came running to meet us, and surrounded us, welcoming our arrival. Then the guests of my father went away, and he approached us, and testified his joy at beholding me. I kissed his hand, and remained standing before him out of respect. He ordered me to be seated. I obeyed; and a little after he said,—

"What studies hast thou pursued? What hast thou learned?"

"The Koran," replied I, "and something of scientific matters."

These words rejoiced him.

The day after my arrival my father gave a great feast, slaughtering an ox and several sheep, and inviting all his friends. We passed a day of joy. A short time afterwards he requested my uncle and me to get ready and go up to the steps of the throne, to offer, in his name, presents to the Sultan, to his Grand Vizier, and to his Vizier.

The Sultan, Mohammed Fadhl, son of Abd-er-Rahman, was at that time very young, so that the government was in the hands of Mohammed Kourra, the Grand Vizier. It was he who had placed the boy on the throne at the death of his father. Report said that he was derived from the slaves of the palace; but this is not true, for he was of free birth. He was a devoted minister, and well fitted to govern, endowed with genius, sagacity, and courage. No man knew better than he to guide political matters.

We started, according to my father's desire, for Tendelty, at that time the seat of the Sultan. This place was called the Fasher, it being the custom in Darfur to apply that name to whatever spot the Sultan chose for his habitation. On the third day we arrived, and found the city filled with crowds of people; there was constant moving to and fro of foot-passengers and of horsemen, and the people were sitting in groups before their doors; the air was filled with the sound of tambourines and the trampling

of cavalry. We repaired at once to the house of the Vizier, Fakih-Malik, to whom my father was immediately subject. He was in the midst of his servants and his suite, and various public officers, but received us with politeness and benevolence, and ordered a place to be prepared for our baggage. Then he offered to conduct us to the palace of Sheikh Mohammed Kourra, which we found surrounded on all sides by the horses, dromedaries, and asses of people who had come to obtain audience. The dignitaries of the state surrounded him. I was introduced as the son of the learned Shereef Omar, of Tunis, and was well received, as were also the presents. He spoke in terms of compliment of my father, and ordered Malik to lodge us. We remained at Tendelty three days, in the midst of honours, festivals, and contentment. Then I was called to audience, and received a present of a green shawl and other garments, two beautiful slaves, and a negro. Then he wrote a complimentary letter, and dismissed me well pleased. As for Malik, he gave me a young slave-girl, whom he described in the letter he also sent, as "firm-bosomed, solid as a cube, and of the age of the Houris." She was named Hamaidah. Well contented to be the bearer of these presents, I returned to my father, and rejoiced his sight.

CHAPTER III.

Omar plans a Visit to Tunis—The Sheikh is established at Aboul-Joudoul—Unfairly deserted by his Father—Insurrection of Mohammed Kourra—His Death—Gallant Fight—Sketch of the History of the Kings of Darfur—Tyrab—Anecdote of the Birguids—A Strange Dowry—Story of the Sultan Abou-Bekr—True Love—Another Story of Passon—Rise of Kourra—A black Economist—Expedition to Kordofal—Its Origin—Designs of Tyrab—A Conspiracy against his Life—Death of Ali Bargou—Diplomacy—Kourra and the chief Wife of Tyrab—Plot—Death of Tyrab—Elevation of the Orphan.

I REMAINED in repose at my father's house until the month of Ramadhan, when my father went to the Fasher to salute the Sultan. There he met the Grand Vizier, Kourra, and begged permission of him to be allowed to go to Tunis, that he might see his mother before her death. He added, that he would leave me in Darfur, for the country where my father resided was a kind of fief which had been confided to him by the late Sultan. He had at first, however, been placed at Guerly, but had refused to remain there, because the inhabitants had no knowledge of the Arabic language. His present district contained three villages. It was agreed, therefore, that I should be settled in that country, that I should collect the taxes, and cultivate it for my advantage.

When Kourra had exacted from my father a promise that he would return to Darfur, he gave him permission to depart, and wrote letters to the chiefs of the various provinces through which he would have to pass, ordering them to receive him and furnish him with escorts. So my father bade adieu to Kourra, and returned to us, thinking of nothing but his journey. He prepared to set out as soon as possible. He sold his cotton, of which he had sown twenty feddans, and turned all he possessed into money, even his flocks, and his oxen, and his asses. He took with him his slave-women, his blacks, and all that I had received from Ahmed Bedawee and from the Sheikh Kourra. He left me only a single slave-woman, who had a web in her eye, called Farhanah, two blacks, with their wives, an ass, and a sick dromedary. He also left me one of his wives, called Zohrah, and his brother's wife, each of whom had a daughter. He sold all his grain-pits, except one, which he gave to me. He then placed in my hands the contract of donation of lands which had been ceded to him by the late Sultan. This document, having enumerated the various titles of the prince, constituted Omar of Tunis the absolute master of the district of Aboul-Joudoul and its three villages. Having thus provided for me, my father put his baggage on his camels, and went away with his slaves, his harem, and his brother, and left me to myself.

Now it came to pass in the month of Regeb,

1219, that the Ab Sheikh, Mohammed Kourra, was killed in a battle during a revolt, in which he was engaged in spite of himself, and in which he was obliged to make war against the Sultan Mohammed Fadhl. His enemies excited the prince against him by their calumnies, accusing him of a desire to dethrone him in favour of his brother. It was this that caused the weather to become cloudy between them. The Sultan tried to seize Kourra, but he escaped from his hands, and went to live among his people in his house, still in the same province. Not being able to reduce him in any other way, the Sultan sent soldiers to prevent him from getting water from the lake in Tendelty. For three days Kourra got water from a distance, but not in sufficient quantities, so that his partisans began to suffer from thirst, and murmured against fortune, and insisted on being led away. But Kourra assembled them, and marching down to the lake, defeated the guards there placed. Upon this the royal army advanced, but was defeated with terrible loss, and the Sultan fled away to the opposite side of the lake. During the night Kourra began to count his loss, and found that his brother had been killed. So he exclaimed, "For whose sake do I now fight? I care for nothing else in life!" And he ordered his people on the next battle not to follow him amidst the foe. This order caused great desertion in his camp, for people felt that he had ceased to wish for victory. In the morning the tambourines gave the signal of

combat, and the troops of the Sultan advanced on horseback. Kourra mounted on his war-steed, and dashed at once into the *mêlée*, breaking the lines opposed to him, until he came in presence of the Sultan, and might have killed him; but he stopped, remembering the benefits he had derived from his father, and exclaimed, "Thou hast listened to the calumnies circulated against me, and this is the way in which you recompense my services." The Sultan was alarmed, and trembled, and wished to fly, and called out to his people, "There he is—he is going to kill me!" So from all sides they rushed upon Kourra, and surrounded him, as the ring surrounds the finger. The Ab, seeing that there was no salvation for him, fought like a lion, and many warriors fell beneath his sword. He soon became covered with wounds, but, in spite thereof, he fought in the midst of the crowd for nearly an hour, until some one, coming behind, hamstrung his horse. Then he fell, and, being heavy with his double iron-mail, could not get up again; so his enemies rushed upon him like dogs upon their prey, and he was killed. May the mercy of God be upon him!

Then they stripped him, and found that he had more than a hundred wounds from sabre or lance. Meanwhile the son of his wife—he was himself an eunuch*—named Shilfoot, came, breaking through the crowd, in the hopes of finding him still alive,

* The eunuchs of high rank in Darfur marry, that they may appear to have a family.

and rescuing him—but it was too late; so he fell right and left upon the enemy, killing numbers of them, and shouting, "Come, the price! the price! Pay me the price of Kourra!" At length, however, he also fell.

Such was the end of the great Ab Sheikh, Mohammed Kourra; and I will now relate his life, and how he raised himself to power; and I will set down, at the same time, what I have learned from several old men about the history of the Sultans of Darfur.

The Sultan Mohammed Fadhl was son of the Sultan Abd-er-Rahman, who was son of the Sultan Ahmed Bekr. The latter had seven sons, Omar, Abûl Kasim, Riz, Rifa, Tyrab, Tahir, and Abd-er-Rahman, surnamed El-Yatim, or The Orphan—because, at the death of his father, he was still unborn. When Ahmed Bekr saw that his hour was drawing nigh, he assembled around him the dignitaries of the state, and declared it to be his last will that the Sultanship should pass alternately from one of his sons to another, as death took them off; but that the children of each should not reign until all the seven were dead. So Omar governed in the first place, and reigned until he fell in battle against the sovereign of Wadaï. His successor, Abûl Kasim, also reigned seven years, and was killed in the same way. To him succeeded Tyrab, surnamed the Seeds of Syria, who hated war, and remained at home, occupied in the cares of government for thirty-three years. He loved boisterous amusements, and was

fond of dress. During his reign there was fertility and peace, and all provisions were cheap. But, towards the end of his life, he was detested on account of the extravagant conduct of his children, who were in number more than thirty, without counting the girls. These princes were ever wandering on horseback through Darfur; and if they heard of any valuable thing at once seized it as their property. Every one suffered by them and feared them. One went so far as to give up riding on horseback, and would only ride upon men, seizing any passers-by, and compelling them to carry him. Complaints were made to the prince, who would not, however, believe or pay any attention to them. The eldest of his sons was called Izhak, surnamed the Kaliph, and was brave, intelligent, but avaricious and tyrannical.

Tyrab was addicted to debauch and to pleasure. Often young girls and boys played and danced together in his presence, and he loved to behold them. One day a troop of Birguids came to the Fasher. These people have a particular dance, called Tendegueh, during which, when the couples are tired, they go, lads and lasses, two by two, to sit together; and so, after they had danced before the Sultan, they went thus to sit two by two, and one of the dancers said to his partner,—

"Wilt thou take me for thy husband?"

"Yes; but what wilt thou give me for a dowry?"

"Alas! I am poor; I can give thee nothing more valuable than he who is opposite me."

This was the Sultan.

"Very good," said the girl: "I accept."

Now it happened that Tyrab was observing their signs, and called them to him, and asked for an explanation. The young man boldly said,—

"I was asking my sweetheart here, if she would marry me; she consents, but asks for a dowry; and I have answered her that I have none other to give but thee."

"This is a singular dowry," said Tyrab; "and has she accepted?"

"Certainly," said the young man.

Then the Sultan said to the girl,—

"Wilt thou allow me to take a substitute, and to pay a ransom?"

"Willingly," answered she; "I consent—I accept."

So Tyrab sent for the father of the young girl, and asked her in marriage, and drew out the contract with her father; and gave to the bride for dowry two beautiful slaves, and to the bridegroom a handsome negro; and, moreover, added wherewith to live comfortably. Verily, this was a fine trait, for there is nothing more excellent than to unite those who love by a pure tie.

A similar story is told of the Kaliph, Abou-Bekr He used to wander by night through the Brilliant City, in order to know the true state of his people,

and to discover who was the victim of oppression. In one of his rounds he heard in the street a young girl singing these verses:—

"Alas, I loved him even before they tore away my talisman;
In his walk he describes the graceful bending of a branch:
His countenance is like the lustre of the full moon—
Like it, he appears and disappears,
And he is of the stock of Hashim."

Abou-Bekr knocked at the door, and said to this young girl,—

"Who is he that thou lovest?"

"Depart from hence," cried she.

He persisted, saying: "Thou must tell me the name of him thou lovest."

"By the name of the Prophet, who is now in his tomb, I conjure thee to depart from hence!"

"By the name of God, I will not go away until thou hast told me who is the object of thy love!"

Then she heaved a profound sigh, and replied,—

"An unhappy flame consumes me; I am full of trouble. I love Mohammed, son of Kasim."

"But art thou free?"

"No; I am a slave."

"Of whom?"

"Of such a one," naming him.

Then Abou-Bekr went away, and, in the morning, learned that the son of Kasim was upon an expedition in Irak. So he bought the young slave-girl, and sent her with a letter to her lover, explaining what had come to pass; and adding, "My son,

how many hearts have sickened unto death for women! and how many virgins have languished in disappointment!"

This reminds me of another story. Suleiman, son of Abdel Malik, was of an extremely jealous disposition, and sometimes put to death individuals whom he suspected of having cast an eye of covetousness on any of his women. Once he called a singer to him: it was daytime; he caused him to sit at the foot of his bed and to sing. Now, it happened that the weather was warm, and a young slave-girl was employed in fanning him, and the combined influence of the music and the cool air sent him to sleep. The singer, whose eyes had been downcast, suddenly looked up and saw the Kaliph slumbering, and the young girl still waving the fan. He fixed his looks upon her, and she seemed to him to be splendid as the sun at the fourth hour of the day. He became troubled, but he dared not speak, for the Kaliph was there. Tears of love gushed from beneath his eyelids, and passion burned within him. He took a piece of paper and wrote upon it these two verses,—

"I have seen thee in a dream—I have seen thee beside me—I drank the cool dew of thy lips.

"Yes, yes, we have passed the time together on the same couch!"

He threw this paper to the young girl, who took it, and added three other verses,—

"Thou hast seen aright: everything that thou darest to hope for thou shalt obtain, even if the jealous one has his face dragged in the dust.

"Yes, thou shalt pass the time by my side, between the bracelets of my wrists: thou shalt come upon my lips and in my arms.

"We shall be the first lovers who have been united in spite of fate and the jealous one."

She threw the paper to the singer, but the Kaliph stretched out his hand and caught it as it passed, and read it. His eyes flashed, and he exclaimed,—

"What motive has guided you? Is this an old intrigue, or is it sudden love that has made you drunk?"

"By the heaven above, it is the love of an instant. No word bound us together."

And tears of fear fell from their eyes. The Kaliph's heart was softened, and, turning to the singer, he said,—

"Take her, but never again appear in my sight."

As I have said, Sultan Tyrab lived to a great age. He had many wives and concubines, and thirty of his sons at a time were able to ride on horseback. Mohammed Kourra was a mere boy when he entered his service. The Sultan put him among the korkoas, or lancers, who march behind the Sultan when he rides out, and guard him during his audiences. But they are not exclusively devoted

to the guard of the prince, but follow also the inferior governors. They suggest the idea of authority. Kourra remained a certain time in this chosen corps, and gave proof of great sagacity. Tyrab loved him, and placed him in the service of the Saum-in-Dogolah, or imperial mansion, a place of great consequence. In his new position, Kourra rendered himself indispensable, and Tyrab generally consulted only him. This roused the jealousy of his colleagues, and one day one of them said to the Sultan, "Kourra is a traitor: I see him every day with one of your concubines, who slyly gives him the best dishes from the kitchen." The Sultan upon this determined to revenge himself, but Kourra, hearing what had happened, took a knife, and, shutting himself up alone in a hut, with his own hand mangled himself. Coming forth, he presented himself before the Sultan who was in a neighbouring hut, and said,—"I was accused of betraying thee, but that is now impossible: I hope I shall no longer be suspected." Then he fainted, and the Sultan, deeply moved, ordered him to be treated with the greatest care.

When Kourra was cured, Tyrab gave him into the care of one of his Viziers, the Emin Aly Wad Jami, and ordered him to be well treated. The Emin received this charge with reluctance. But, nevertheless, Kourra was at length named chief of the guard of the Saum-in-Dogolah. In this position he distinguished himself by a more economical and

methodical arrangement of the dishes supplied to each department of the palace; so that every one was better satisfied than before, and there remained sufficient to serve as presents to people who happened to be receiving strangers. It was supposed that these presents came from the Vizier, for Kourra had the prudence to conceal his share in the matter. Many people came to give thanks for what they had received, and he, whilst listening to them, was puzzled, and could not understand wherefore they praised him. One day, on coming out of the harem, he perceived Kourra distributing dishes, and stopped and hid himself to listen. Presently he heard a voice saying,—"How many strangers are there with such a king?"—"So many."—"Then take him so many dishes, and do not forget to say that the Emin sent them." In this way Kourra forwarded a variety of presents, and the Vizier discovered the origin of the praises that had been given him, and was pleased, and raised him to the rank of superintendent of the stud—a very high dignity. Kourra remained at this post until he accompanied the Vizier to Kordofal with the Sultan Tyrab.

I shall say a few words of the origin of this expedition. In former days there was a Sultan, named Saloun, who divided with his brother the country which they had inherited—Saloun taking Darfur, and his brother Kordofal, which had formerly been united under one government. They swore never to undertake any intrigue one against

the other, and they and their descendants remained in peace for nearly two centuries, until the time of Sultan Tyrab. Sultan Hashim, prince of Kordofal, then collected a great army, and being of an ambitious disposition, determined, it is said, to conquer Darfur. He began by sending marauding parties to the frontiers, and when his cousin wrote to him, begging to cease his molestations, answered insolently. Tyrab, therefore, resolved to make war, or, at least, chose this as a pretext. The real reason, however, was, that he had formed a plan for breaking through the law of succession laid down by Ahmed Bekr at his death. He wished to leave his throne to Izhak, the Kaliph, and resolved to send the sons and grandsons of Ahmed Bekr, and of the great people, into battle, that they might be killed, and so that there should be nobody to oppose his designs. His secret, however, was discovered, and, indeed, his whole plan subsequently failed, by the death of his son, Izhak, who was killed in battle, as will be seen.

At the news of the approach of Tyrab, Hashim fled away with his suite and family, and took refuge in Sennaar, so that Kordofal was conquered with ease. The Sultan ransacked the country, and reduced the people to silence, and remained there until the next year, when his troops and his followers loudly demanded to be allowed to return to Darfur. He, however, pretended that Hashim was about to return, and that it was necessary to remain to resist him. Soon, however, the disgust of the army increased, and

secret councils began to be held. At one of these, the Vizier, Ali Wad Bargou, whose daughter Tyrab had married, said boldly,—"What will you give me if I kill the Sultan? I will get rid of him, and you shall put in his place whom you please." Those whose children Tyrab had taken out to expose them to the danger of being killed promised him great wealth if he succeeded, and it was agreed that the roll of a drum should give the signal of assistance.

At close of day Ali Bargou put on two cuirasses of solid mail, and concealed them with his clothes, and, taking his sword, penetrated into the palace, where was his daughter. He knew the love which Tyrab bore her, and thought that the prince might be there; but he found only the princess, who at once perceived something sinister in his countenance. Ali asked news of the Sultan. She replied, that she would go and fetch him, and he told her to do so; but at the same time she perceived the edge of the cuirass shining above his garment, and went and betrayed him, and the guards came, and, after a vigorous resistance, put him to death. This done, the drum of alarm was beaten, and the Viziers and other dignitaries began to collect, thinking that the conspiracy had succeeded. They found the Sultan surrounded by his guards, and dressed in a black garment, with a red turban pulled over his eyes. These are the signs of anger. The corpse of Bargou was brought out, wrapped in a cloak, and uncovered. "Now," said Tyrab, "do you know who that is, and

why he is here ?" They thought themselves betrayed, and were humble, but explained that they desired to return to their own country. Their language revealed that there was danger of a revolt, and the Sultan determined to temporise. He promised to return as soon as his health was re-established, for he pretended to be ill, and soon afterwards shut himself up in his palace, as if he were in danger. For this deception he was punished. God afflicted him in reality with disease, so he wrote a letter to the Kaliph, Izhak, begging him to come and join him, and presently the news got abroad that he was at the last extremity: some even said that he was really dead.

Now, Mohammed Kourra used often to visit Kinaneh, the chief wife of Tyrab, who bore the title of Yakoury, or queen, which, however, is sometimes given to the other wives. This princess was a woman of great sagacity, and, knowing that Tyrab was near death, spoke to Kourra, and asked his advice. He replied, that the best plan would be to follow the fortunes of the Orphan, to whom the empire would certainly fall, and promised that he would get her named Yakoury, and her son appointed Kaliph. Izhak was sprung from another legitimate wife of Tyrab. Kourra made the treaty in secret, and stipulated for the position of Ab, which is always held by an eunuch. Meanwhile the illness of Tyrab increased, and he called his Viziers around him, and expressed his last desires, especially stipulating that

the army should be placed under the orders of Izhak. They promised to obey him, and retired. Shortly afterwards Tyrab died, and Kinaneh immediately despatched Kourra to the Orphan with the chaplet of the Sultan, his handkerchief, his seal, and his amulet, as a proof of the death of the prince. The Viziers, who had received the last orders of Tyrab, returned and found him dead. They regretted that they had left him, and immediately embalmed the body, and placed it in a palanquin, and intended to start for Darfur, pretending that the Sultan was ill. Their object was to deliver the whole country into the hands of Izhak. But Sheikh Kourra, in the meantime, had gone to the Orphan, and told him what had happened, and he came to the palace with two of his elder brothers, and caused it to be understood that they knew what had occurred. The Viziers, who wished to obey the last orders of Tyrab, were astonished, and began to fear that their plan would fail; but among them was the Emin Aly Wad Jami, who declared that he would abide by the orders he had received. So he called Kourra, and said to him,—"Go, and tell my son, Mohammed, to arm his soldiers, and come to the palace." But Kourra, who had gone over to the party of the Orphan, ordered the soldiers to place themselves under his command; and Aly Jami, finding himself betrayed, poisoned himself.

CHAPTER IV.

New Sultan—Anecdotes of the Orphan—Death of Izhak—Just Administration—The Ulemas—A Mamlook Refugee—Conspiracy—How it was defeated—The Reward of Kinaneh—An ignorant Vizier—Mohammed Kourra—Instance of his great Wisdom—He is appointed Ab—Death of Abd-er-Rahman—Fadhl succeeds to the Throne.

It was now necessary to proceed to the election of a new Sultan, and after some discussion the council of princes procured the setting aside of Riz, on account of his violent character, and of Tahir, on account of the number of his children, and placed Abd-er-Rahman, the Orphan, upon the throne. Every one was satisfied with the choice, and great rejoicings filled the country.

The youth of Abd-er-Rahman had been exemplary. He had learned the Koran by heart, and had applied himself to the study of laws. He had never imitated the bad habits common to the sons of the Sultans of Darfur, who used to ride through the country and treat every Forian as if he had been a slave. From his earliest age he had been without

reproach, and pure, and if he arrived, during his travels, at any place, he used to say, "I am the host of God," and if he were well received, he remained, and, if not, he went his way. It is related that, in one of his travels, he put up in the house of a man belonging to the Berli tribe. This man recognised him, and killed a fat sheep for his sake. Upon which the Orphan said,—

"My friend, might we not have been satisfied with less than this? If thou hadst killed a fowl, it would have been sufficient."

"No, my master, no! I swear by God, if I had possessed a she-camel, I would have killed it for thee! Art thou not Abd-er-Rahman, the son of our Sultan?"

"And how dost thou know me?"

"I know thee by thy virtues and thy piety, and I predict that days of glory await thee."

"Then I, too, swear by the name of God, that if ever I become king, I will give thee wherewith to enjoy better cheer than this!"

He kept his promise, and when he became Sultan appointed his host to be tax-gatherer over the Arab tribe called the Madmen. Many similar stories are told of him, and the country was full of predictions that it would be the Orphan who would succeed Tyrab. The latter prince once tried to poison him, but failed. It was generally reported that his love of science overcame all other passions. He went about in an old ragged shirt, with a wooden

chaplet in his hand. He remained in celibacy until his beard began to whiten, being, in fact, too poor to buy a slave or to marry. He never had a companion until, on his way to Kordofal with his brother, the Sultan, a king gave him as a present an ugly slave, named Anbousah, by whom he had a son, the Sultan Mohammed Fadhl, who now reigns.

Abd-er-Rahman distinguished himself by vigour at the outset of his reign, abolished the custom of seven days of laziness after the inauguration, and prepared to depart for Darfur, and dispute the possession of the country with Izhak. The two hostile armies met and fought twice. During the second battle, it is said, at mid-day the stars appeared in the sky. I have seen the battle-field; it is perfectly arid, and I was told that no plant would grow there on account of the quantity of blood that had been spilt. Izhak was defeated on both occasions, and retired into the northern provinces, where he reigned for some time with great cruelty, and gained some advantages in the war that ensued. The struggle continued for a long time, until the Kaliph was killed in a battle by Zabady, an Egyptian fellah, who shot him from a distance. This ended the war, and Abd-er-Rahman became sovereign of the whole country, and established his Fasher at Tendelty.

When the Orphan was free from the anxieties of war he applied himself to administrative reforms,

and did everything he could to increase the prosperity of the country. He repressed the habit of drunkenness and debauchery that had prevailed, and rendered the roads so secure that a woman could travel there with all her ornaments. Commerce increased, and comfort was spread through the country. Justice and equity prevailed. He had no pity on those who committed an act of violence or spoliation of any kind, however nearly related.

It has been related to me that he was once met, as he returned from the chase, by two Arabs, one of whom addressed him in these words :—"An injustice has been done me, O Rashid!* may God preserve thee, an injustice has been done me!" Now, it is the custom among the Forians, that whoever has been a victim of violence utters the cry called Karourak, which is never uttered on any other occasion. The sound is produced by the help of two fingers inserted into the mouth, and moved rapidly from side to side, whilst the letter K is intonated, followed by a paralysed R. Well, one of our Arabs was rolling the Karourak, and repeating "May God preserve the Rashid, I am the victim of an injustice!" but the Sultan, at first, paid no heed, either being occupied by some idea, or not hearing, on account of the sound of the tambourines, and the songs and the hurrahs of the soldiers. The Arab had Karouraked several times, and the Sultan

* Rashid was one of the titles of the Orphan.

had not asked the reason. Then the other Arab said to his companion, "Let him alone; Rashid is all for himself, and cares nothing for thee." The Sultan heard these words, and asked what was meant. The man replied,—

"My friend here has Karouraked several times, and has complained to thee. This was the origin of my remark."

The Sultan smiled, and said,—

"Not so, I am not all for myself. Who has done thee injury?"

"Basy-Khabir."*

Now, Basy-Khabir was one of the relations of the Orphan, who, however, asked,—"What has he taken from thee?"

"He has taken five she-camels."

The Sultan inquired into this charge, and having found it to be true, condemned Khabir to give back ten camels instead of five.

Abd-er-Rahman nominated, as he had promised, Mohammed Kourra to the post of Father-Sheikh, the highest dignity in Darfur. He who bears it is invested with the right of life and death, and has a court and insignia like the Sultan. No one but an eunuch can occupy this post, because it is feared that whoever occupies it may be induced to conspire to raise himself to the throne. When Kourra was confirmed in his dignity of Ab, the Sultan sent him

* Basy is a title meaning great, and is applied to most of the courtiers.

to the provinces, and he established himself at Aboul-Joudoul.

If the Sultan was severe towards criminals, he was remarkable for his benevolence for Ulemas and Shereefs, and other learned men, who came flocking to visit him from all sides. Among these was my father, who, when he arrived in Darfur, had gone to live at Kobeih, in the house of a sheikh. Many of the principal learned men of the country came here to visit him, and beg him to explain the book of the Sheikh Khalil on Muslim canon law, which he did. The news of his learning came to the ears of the Sultan, who called him to his court, and lodged him in the house of one of his sons-in-law, named Nour-el-Ansary. This man was a Fakih, and loved knowledge. He studied with my father, and spoke of his learning to the Sultan, who read on scientific subjects with my father during the month of Ramadhan. He also requested my father to comment for him the book on the privileges accorded by God to the Prophet, by a Turkish writer, and he produced a commentary, called "The Perfect Pearl," which he afterwards followed by another work of the same nature, called "The Equal Pearls."

Abd-er-Rahman was likewise generous, as well as just and pure in manners. He was of middle size, of a dark black complexion, with a beard speckled with white, and a coarse and deep voice. He easily became angry, but he calmed promptly, and pardoned easily. He was possessed of presence of mind and

tact, of which I shall give some examples. When the French came to Cairo, and the Mamlouks were driven away, one of the Kashefs, named Zawanah, fled to Darfur, along with about ten other Mamlouks. He had with him also considerable property, with camels, servants, a cook, a valet, and several grooms; he had also with him a cannon and a howitzer. Upon his arrival, he was well received by Abd-er-Rahman, who gave him a dwelling-place, and assigned to him a revenue, and bestowed upon him numerous female slaves. After a little while he begged permission to build a house, like those of Cairo; and, having caused bricks to be baked, got together a number of workmen, chosen among the black slaves, to cut stones, and constructed a habitation of some grandeur. He surrounded it by a wall of extraordinary solidity, with two embrasures turned towards the palace, which this little fortress completely commanded. The fact was, that this Ghouz had formed the mad plan of killing Abd-er-Rahman, and seizing on the government of Darfur. His idea was, that some day, when the Sultan came out with his courtiers, he would fire a volley of grape-shot among them, and thus clear the way to the throne.

However, Zawanah feared, that after the accomplishment of the assassination of the Orphan, the Forians would refuse to obey him. He therefore put himself in communication with the prince, whose sister had married Sultan Tyrab, and proposed to him that they should put his nephew on the throne.

The prince agreed to this project, and the conspiracy widened, until one of the chief courtiers was tampered with. This man went and betrayed the whole to the Sultan, who told him to seem to consent, and to keep the secret. Next day Zawanah went to visit Abd-er-Rahman, who received him with more distinction than ever, and presented him with a hundred male slaves, and a hundred female slaves, and a hundred she-camels, and a hundred jars of butter, and a hundred jars of honey, and a hundred loads of millet. He clothed him also in a red shawl and a piece of red cloth, and girded him with the sword, and gave him a horse with a saddle embroidered with gold. The Kashef, transported with joy, departed. "These objects," said he, "are sent to me by God, to help me towards success!" In the evening, an hour and a-half after the setting of the sun, the Sultan called one of the kings, and ordered him to be on the watch with his soldiers for the time when Zawanah should return to the palace, and then to go and seize his house, and take possession of everything it contained.

These orders having been given, the Sultan sent a lad to the Kashef, to invite him to spend the evening, and he came immediately, and was received with politeness. Some of his servants tried to follow him, but were stopped at the third gate, and told to wait for their master. Abd-er-Rahman sat conversing with the Kashef until a late hour, when he began to say, "I am very hungry," and ordered food to be

brought. A piece of roast meat was placed before them, and a knife was called for, but none was at hand. Upon this the Kashef produced one, and wished to carve; but some of those present begged him not to give himself that trouble, and took away the knife. He then produced his poignard, which was also taken from him. The Sultan now gave a signal, and Zawanah was seized and bound.

"What evil have I done thee," said the prince, "that thou shouldest seek to assassinate me, to seduce my soldiers, and lead them to revolt?"

"Prince, listen to me!"

"God will not listen to thee, even if I were to listen;" and he gave orders that the Kashef should be put to death immediately. They cut his throat as they would that of a sheep. Shortly afterwards they brought to the palace all the wealth that the Kashef possessed, and there remained nothing in the house, which was demolished, so that not a trace was left.*

The servants and people of Zawanah were pardoned, but all the natives who had been connected with the conspiracy were, one by one, at different times, seized and put to death. The brother-in-law of Tyrab, among others, after having been allowed

* It is evident that this is the account of a partisan; and, if we could interest ourselves in these distant politics, we might perhaps become convinced that Zawanah was the victim of that jealousy and fear which all powerful foreigners excite in Darfur. We shall presently see that, in one case at least, Abd-er-Rahman did not merit the title of Rashid. It is very possible that he regretted the wealth he had bestowed upon the Mamlouk.

for some time to suppose that he was not suspected, was put to death much in the same way as Zawanah, and all his property was confiscated. All this was accomplished in the adroitest manner possible; and, one by one, the whole of Abd-er-Rahman's enemies fell before him.

It will be remembered that he had promised great privilege and power to the Yakoury Kinaneh; but, when he had reached the throne, he neglected to fulfil the promises he had made, either on account of business, which occupied him, or because he feared something from this clever woman or her son, Habib. Angry at this indifference, and finding herself forgotten in the harem, and separated from her son, who lived at a distance, the Yakoury set on foot a conspiracy to place Habib on the throne, for she had lost all hope of his elevation, according to the arrangement made, since a new son had been born to Abd-er-Rahman. This prince, however, though he had neglected her, had maintained her in the rank of Yakoury, having supreme authority in the interior of the palace.

She set about the execution of her project in the following manner:—

"My son," said she to Abd-er-Rahman, "wishes to give a great feast, and I should be glad to help him by sending dishes from hence."

The Sultan gave permission, and she accordingly prepared great wooden bowls, and placed therein coats of mail and swords, and put food upon the top, and

sent forth a hundred at a time, in order to prepare for an insurrection. Having succeeded the first time, she allowed some days to pass, and again asked permission to send to her son the materials of a second repast. Again the Sultan consented, for he did not suspect that Kinaneh harboured any evil design against him, for he was a man without guile or thought of evil.

Kinaneh was successful a second time, and, some days afterwards, she determined to make a third attempt. But, about this time, Abd-er-Rahman perceived, by accident, with Kinaneh, a young girl whom she was bringing up, and who was of high birth and extraordinary beauty. He became enamoured of her, and resolved to speak to the Yakoury, that he might marry her; but Kinaneh, who had seen the effect produced by the girl's beauty, and who destined her for her son Habib, punished her for allowing herself to be seen. This was the cause of the failure of her conspiracy. The girl, angered by her ill-treatment, and knowing of her conspiracy, escaped, and went and spoke secretly to the Sultan, and announced to him that Kinaneh was carrying away weapons from the armoury of his highness, and that all the dishes sent for the festivals concealed cuirasses and swords.

"If you doubt the truth of this," said she, "upset one of the bowls which are to be carried forth to-morrow, and you will be convinced."

The Sultan begged her not to speak of what she

knew to any one, and she left him agitated and disquieted.

Next day Abd-er-Rahman was informed, by a man whom he had set as a watch, that the bowls destined for Habib were about to be carried forth. He went immediately and ordered the covers to be taken off, that he might look at the dishes prepared. Among them was one of which he was very fond, so he said,—

"Leave me this, and pour it out into little vases; I want to eat of it."

The slaves were about to obey, when Kinaneh came in hastily, and said,—

"Prince, I conjure you not to touch these dishes. I will prepare for you exactly similar."

"No," said he, "for what you may now make may not please me so well."

Kinaneh was obliged to yield, and said,—

"Well, let the slaves carry away the others, and keep that one."

"No," said he, "empty it, and when you have filled it again, you may take away the whole together."

So the bowl was emptied, and a cuirass was found at the bottom.

"Oh!" said the Sultan, "what is this?"

Kinaneh was troubled, and knew not what to answer. She was immediately seized, and all the bowls were upset, and found to be full of weapons and money.

"What evil have I done to thee?" said the Sultan to the Yakoury. "Wherefore dost thou conspire against me?"

Kinaneh had nothing to say in reply, and she was immediately put to death. Her son was seized and sent into prison, in the Marrah mountains, and all his wealth was confiscated. As for his accomplices, they were put to death every one, and the country remained tranquil.

Abd-er-Rahman raised to the post of Vizier the Fakih Malik-el-Foutawy, whom he believed to be a man of knowledge and property. This man pretended to know the secret of letters and sciences, although his ignorance was complete. He affected great piety and contempt of the things of this world. When he was raised to the Viziership, he caused to be placed under his authority all the Fullans of Darfur, for he was of that race himself; and he took their part, and protected them even against just complaints. My father has related to me, as an instance of the ignorance of this Vizier, that the Sultan begged him to preach on the day of the festival of Bairam. He asked my father to compose his oration for him. So he composed it, and wrote at the end :—"By the servant of God, the humble one, who implores his bounty, Omar of Tunis, son of Suleiman, on such a day, of such a year;" and delivered the paper to the Fakih. On the day of the festival, having prayed with the Sultan, the Fakih got into the pulpit, and delivered his sermon with great energy, ending with

these words:—"By the servant of God, the humble one, who implores his bounty, Omar of Tunis, son of Suleiman, on such a day, of such a year." He thought this was part of the sermon.

Let us now return to Mohammed Kourra. The Sultan considerably extended the power of this Sheikh, and raised him so high that nobody in the state could approach him. Now the news came that Hashim, who had been expelled from Kordofal by Tyrab, had returned, and retaken the country; so Abd-er-Rahman got together a great army, and placed it under the command of Kourra, who departed, and completely succeeded. He reconquered Kordofal, and drove Hashim into the desert. He remained seven years in that country, sending, from time to time, great riches to his sovereign. But jealous enemies calumniated him, and Abd-er-Rahman sent a general, with an army, to replace him. His object was to test the submission of Kourra. So he gave to the general a pair of fetters, telling him to put them upon Kourra's feet, and send him back to Darfur. When the general arrived in Kordofal he went to Kourra, expecting to meet with resistance, but the Ab said,—

"Who has ordered thee, and what must be done?"

"I must put these fetters on thy feet, and send thee to the Sultan."

"I am ready. Give me the fetters."

Kourra put them on with his own hand, and

called a workman to rivet them, and next day set out, and in due time arrived in Darfur.

When the Sultan heard of what had taken place, he said to his courtiers: "Was I not right to say that Kourra would never revolt against me?" And he sent a person to take off his fetters, and received the Ab with great state, and gave him a pair of bracelets of gold, and raised him to a still higher degree of dignity and power. This wise conduct was afterwards useful to his son, Mohammed Fadhl. For, when Abd-er-Rahman died, the Ab took charge of the interests of this prince, and succeeded in placing him upon the throne. Great energy was required to bring about this result, and an insurrection took place against the new Sultan, who, in fact, was a mere boy. Kourra did all he could to instruct him, and to improve his mind, and to prepare him for government. Fadhl was not a willing scholar, but he was compelled to obey, and he passed two years in study, which to him was intolerably disagreeable. During this time Kourra governed with a strong hand, and kept the country quiet; but the people around the court, discontented with his severity, at length excited the Sultan to get rid of him. Kourra, therefore, was obliged to defend himself by arms, and shortly afterwards perished, as we have already related, and God knows all things!

CHAPTER V.*

Line of African Kingdoms—Takrour—Description of Dar-el-Four—Wandering Arabs—The Barajoub—The Forians—North-western Provinces—Dajo and Bijo—Birguids—Marrah Mountaineers—Division of the Country—Cavern Prisons—A Visit to the Marrah—Strange Inhabitants—The Sheikh of the Mountain—Genii—Gathering of Guides—An Oratory—Wild Savages—The Prisons—Women—Curious Customs—Spirits called Damzog—Stories of them—Prophetic Drum.

Darfur, or, more properly, Dar-el-fur, the country of Fur, is the third kingdom of Soudan, counting from east to west. The first is Sennaar; the second Kordofal; the fourth is Wadaï; the fifth Bagirmeh; the sixth Bornou; the seventh Adagez;† the eighth Afnou; the ninth Timbuktou; the tenth Dar-Mella, where resides the King of the Fullan, or Fellatahs.

Formerly, the name of Takrour was applied only to the inhabitants of Bornou, but it is now extended

* The Sheikh, who had already abandoned his personal narrative to relate the historical incidents that preceded or were contemporary with his residence in Darfur, now assumes a didactic tone, and gives the result of his observations, interspersing personal adventures and anecdotes. It is, perhaps, necessary to repeat that Darfur is pronounced Darfoor.

† Aghadez, described in Mr. Richardson's "Mission to Central Africa."

to all the people who live between the eastern limit of Wadaï and the western limit of Bornou; so that it includes, besides these two countries, Bagirmeh, Katakou, and Mandarah. Some days ago I met, at Cairo, an individual whom I recognised as a Soudanee. I asked him to what country he belonged. He replied, "I am a Takrour." "But from what place?" said I. After some difficulty, he replied that he was from Bagirmeh.

Darfur is bounded on the east by a sandy and nearly sterile country, and the same description applies to the provinces situated between it and Wadaï. Southward are vast plains, stretching to Dar-fertit, and to the north is the desert, which I have described on my way from Egypt. The country, which is forty days in length from north to south, and eighteen days' breadth, is divided into numerous provinces, each under the authority of a governor. Some of these governors bear the title of Sultan, but they are all dependent on the Sultan of Darfur. Their mode of life is very similar, and their costume is uniform, except in the case of the Tunjour, who wear a black turban. I asked one of them the reason. He told me that his ancestors had formerly been sovereigns of the whole country, but had been dispossessed by the Forians, and that, since that time, they had worn the black turban as a sign of mourning.

On the east and south, Darfur is surrounded by tribes of wandering Arabs, whose wealth consists

in cattle, horses, and furniture. They lead a nomadic life, going from pasturage to pasturage. Some of them possess great herds of camels. The Sultan of Darfur claims from them an annual impost, which they sometimes refuse. The Red Masirieh and the Rezeigat, being the most powerful and most distant in the desert, only give the refuse of their flocks. The agent who is sent to collect the tribute is sometimes beaten and killed. Attempts have been made to punish them by force, but they are generally repulsed with loss. The Arabs retire, if too hotly attacked, with their flocks into the Barajoub, a country situated to the south-east of Darfur. It is a vast marsh, ten days' journey in extent, but covered with thick forest. Rain is said to fall there all the year round, except during two months.

The whole country of Darfur, on both sides of the chain of mountains, and north and south, is inhabited by a variety of tribes which do not belong, properly speaking, to the Forian race. The latter, who speak a language apart, occupy the range of mountains, but have conquered the whole surrounding country. There are in the country also a number of people of mixed race, children of strangers.

The districts on the northern frontier are the most fully populated. They are called Zaghawah and Berti, and exhibit a remarkable contrast; the people of the latter being gentle and good, and of

agreeable physiognomy, with women of remarkable beauty, whilst the people of the latter are different from them in every respect. The corresponding districts, at the southern extremity, are Dajo and Bijo, and the women of the latter are also more beautiful than the women of the former. The people of Birguid and of Tunjour, who occupy the middle provinces, are not contrasted by personal appearance, but by character; the former being treacherous, dishonest, and rapacious, without fear of God or the Prophet, whilst the latter have a certain amount of religion and intelligence. The mountaineers of Marrah are all savage and brutal in the same degree, except that at Dar-Abbima, towards the south, both men and women are more affable and of more agreeable aspect. Glory be to the Creator, who has permitted these striking contrasts! At Dar-el-Massalit the beauty of the women is ravishing, silencing the reason and captivating the heart. Nevertheless, the most beautiful women who are found in Darfur are, without exception, those of Arab descent; and the same remark applies to the men.

All the provinces of Darfur, properly so called, are divided into lots, which constitute so many properties, each belonging to one of the high dignitaries of the state. The two largest appanages of this kind are those of Abdima and Tekeniwi. They each have under their orders twelve governors, bearing the title of "Shartay," or prefect. The Aba Oma has under his orders four governors; the For-an-Aba has also

four governors, and the Ab-Sheikh four. Besides the territories specially assigned to these great functionaries, there are portions kept for the Emins, Shereefs, Kadis, &c. In this way it happens that the Sultan really possesses only certain domains, as Guerly, Tendelty, &c.

About one-half of Darfur is plain country. Towards the east the land is almost entirely sandy, but the slopes of Mount Marrah are composed of black mould. This chain, as I have said, traverses nearly the whole length of Darfur, but is cut into a variety of groups, by transversal defiles. On this kind of sierra are established numerous populous tribes. Among these are the Kunjarah, from which are derived the Sultans of Darfur. In this range are hollowed out an enormous quantity of caverns, some of which are used as prisons for the sons of princes, others for viziers, &c.

The Forians of Marrah are well off, possessing abundance of oxen and sheep. There is no other province the inhabitants of which can be compared to these mountaineers. All their flocks and herds feed alone, without guard, and no care is taken against robbers, or against lions, or against wolves.

In the year 1220 of the Hegira (1805 A.D.) I asked permission of Sultan Mohammed Fadhl to go and visit the mountain of Marrah, with a firman from him. He hesitated at first, fearing for me, on account of the savageness of the inhabitants, but afterwards he allowed me to depart. He gave me

an escort and a firman, addressed to all the governors of the mountains, enjoining them to aid and protect me, and allow me to see every thing that was curious, whether apparent or hidden. I started accordingly, with two Falkanahwy, or policemen, two of my own slaves, and an inhabitant of my village. We marched for two days, and the third we arrived near the mountain, and came to a village called Numleh, the chief of which was Fakih-Nemr. This Nemr had two sons. We stopped at their house, and were received with politeness. Having explained the object of our journey, and exhibited our firman, they prepared to honour us, and served up an excellent meal. Next day we went to see the market of Numleh, which is held every Monday,—men and women crowding thither from all parts of the mountain, to buy and sell. I beheld there a remarkably black population, with blood-shot eyes and reddish teeth. When I appeared, the astonished crowd collected around me: they marvelled at my brown complexion, flushed with red. Every one came in a succession of crowds to examine me. They had never seen before an Arab of my colour, and it entered into their heads that it would be a curious thing to kill me, that they might examine me more at their leisure. But I did not understand the subject of their discussion until I saw my escort draw their swords, and interpose between the crowd and me. I asked what was the reason of this movement, and they answered,—

"These blacks wish to kill thee."

"And wherefore?"

"They are ignorant brutes, and say that thou camest into the world before thy time; that thou art not a ripe man. Others pretend that thy skin is so thin that, if a fly were to prick thee, all thy blood would start out. Another has proposed to give thee a wound, to discover how long it would take to empty thy veins. This is why we feared for thy life."

My people took me away from the market, beating back the crowd as we went. It was with some difficulty that we escaped. From thence we proceeded to a valley, which we found to be shaded by date-trees and bananas, and some lemon-trees, and plentifully sown with onions, garlic, red-pepper, cumin, coriander, fenugreek, and short and long cucumbers. It was autumn, and the dates were just beginning to blush. They cut for me two clusters of the red fruit, and two clusters of the yellow, and they gave me a great gourd full of honey, of which I have never tasted or smelt the equal. We passed the night pleasantly in that place, and in the morning began traversing a series of valleys, divided by ranges of hills, each about a mile in breadth. Everywhere was a luxuriant cultivation, and the running streams, that glanced over their sandy beds, seemed like streaks of silver. Each valley is bordered on either hand by a kind of hedge of trees, which cause it to resemble a winding avenue.

We sat down in a shady place: a fat kid was killed, and we feasted upon it with delight. We then proceeded to a village at the foot of the mountain, where we were well received, and rested till next morning, when we climbed the great range. We were three hours in reaching the summit. On all sides, upon the slopes, we saw numerous villages, and an ample population. We were taken to the Sheikh of the mountain, named Abou-Bekr, whom we found alone. He was a very old man, covered with wrinkles. When we had saluted him, he welcomed us, and bade us sit down.

It is remarkable, that the summit of these mountains is only completely free from clouds for a few days of the year. There is sufficient rain to allow wheat to come to perfection. Few harvests can be compared to these, except those of Barbary and Europe. The rest of Darfur, with the exception of a few cantons, where well-water is used, does not produce wheat. On a certain day of the year the Sheikh, or Old Man of the Mountain, of whom we have spoken, is visited in crowds by the people for consultation. On that solemn day, set apart for divination, he predicts what is to come to pass during the year,—drought or rain, war or peace, serenity or misfortune, disease or health. His prophecies are profoundly believed; but the Forians differ in opinion about the source and the cause of the power which he possesses of seeing into the future. Some pretend that he works by Divine

inspiration, and that he who wears the dignity of Sheikh of the Mountain, is necessarily, and always, illuminated of God, and a holy personage. This is the explanation of the learned men of Darfur. Others declare that the genii tell him what is to come to pass. For my part, I do not know what value should be assigned to these two opinions; but this I do know, that many prophecies are attributed to him which have not been fulfilled.

On hearing the contents of our firman, the Old Man of the Mountain overwhelmed us with kindness, and ordered a meal to be prepared. Then he sent out some one to the east of the hill with orders to beat the great tambourine, called "Tenbel," and presently from all sides numerous people came streaming towards us. From the crowd thus collected he chose a hundred young men, and appointed over them, as chief, one of his relations, called the Fakih Zaid, celebrated for his courage. He expressly ordered this troop not to quit me for a moment, and to be ever on their guard against the rustic brutality of the mountaineers.

We got on horseback and rode away over the high land towards a solitary peak which specially bears the name of Marrah, and from which the whole chain has so been called. There we found a kind of small oratory, esteemed highly sacred by the people, who venerate it equally with the mosques. An enormous tree overshadows this oratory, on which the sun never shines. We entered and sat down

awhile. There are several servants of the place whose duty it is to keep it clean, and to receive the offerings or ex-votoes of visitors.

Proceeding on our journey, the soldiers of Zaid marching in front, we soon beheld a multitude of men and women running towards us from all sides. I was looked upon as an extraordinary being. There was a perfect scramble to get sight of me. They pushed and shoved one another, and though the escort closed around they could scarcely keep off the crowd. These strange people were saying one to the other, "The Sultan has sent to us a man born before his time, that we may eat him." Others exclaimed, "No; this is not a human being, but an animal under the form of a man, whose flesh is good to eat." These mountaineers cannot believe in the existence of men with white skins and rosy complexions.

These savages know of Arabic only the few words which compose the confession of faith, and these they pronounce wildly with a broken, jerking manner. However, the agreeable reflections of the populace were translated to me, and I became afraid. Zaid also, finding it impossible to keep off the crowd in any other way, told me to hide my face in the shawl of my turban, leaving only my eyes visible; so I veiled myself and stood in the midst of the soldiers. The negroes, no longer seeing my face, were stupified and said,—

"Where is the red fellow?"

"He has returned to the Sultan," was the reply, and by degrees they left us.

We now proceeded to the state-prisons, that is to say, the caverns where the sons of princes and viziers are incarcerated. The gaolers at first plumply refused admission, and we almost came to a serious quarrel, but Zaid read out my firman, and the chief was calmed. He then said that I might go into the caverns alone, if I pleased, but that my companions must remain aloof. I refused to take advantage of this permission, fearing that some evil might befall me, and expressed my wish to depart.

It is the custom among the mountaineers of Marrah, that no one shall marry a woman until he has lived with her, and had by her one or two children, and thus convinced himself that she is fruitful. Then the man remains with the woman, and regards her as his wife. Women do not, as with us, avoid the society of men. If a husband, on returning home, finds his wife conversing with a man, he is not angry unless with good cause. Young boys and girls do not conceal any part of their bodies until the age of puberty. At that age the boys wear a shirt and the girls a kind of short petticoat; but from the navel upwards they remain quite naked.

The Forians of Marrah are brutal and passionate, especially in a state of drunkenness. They are excessively avaricious, and never receive any guests besides their parents, except for interested motives. They have no idea of cleanliness, no variety or art

in the preparation of their food; they eat indifferently whatever they see that seems eatable. Bitter or rotten substances are not cast away, and they sometimes even prefer this kind of food to others. In every village the young men have a chief whom they call Wornan, and the young girls also have a chief called Meirem. On days of rejoicing, festivals and ceremonies, the Wornan assembles his lads, and all go and sit down in a large place. Then the Meirem appears with her damsels, and advances a little a-head of them and sits down. The chief of the young men comes forward and talks with her, and then she orders her girls to divide themselves among the youths; so each one takes away a companion and goes and passes the time where he pleases.

In Darfur the men devote themselves alone to no trade except that of war, from which alone the women are dispensed. Both sexes follow their occupations pell-mell, except that the most fatiguing work is given to the women. Men and women remain always together night and day; and it is remarkable that, contrary to the opinion of Europe, the constant society of the female sex does not in any way soften the manners of the country. The people of Marrah do not consume the wheat which they harvest, but sell it and buy millet.

The most singular thing I heard related whilst I was in these mountains is this, that the genii act as guardians of the cattle. It is for this reason that

the herds are left to wander where they will. Many persons assured me seriously that if any one, passing near a flock and seeing it without a guard, should attempt to steal a sheep or a cow, and to kill the beast, his hand, still armed with the knife, would remain fastened to the throat until the arrival of the owner. I have a hundred times heard instances of protection afforded by the genii, but was at first inclined to reject the whole as lies and dreams. But this is what happened to myself. Being near the Marrah mountains I went to a person of Numleh, to question him about the genii. On drawing near his hut I saw nobody, but began to call him by his name. Then a loud and terrible voice, which made me shiver, shouted "Akibe!" that is to say, "He is not here." Nevertheless, I was going to advance and pursue my inquiries, when an individual, who was passing by me, took me by the arm and drew me away, saying,—

"Be off! be off! He who speaks to thee is not a human being."

"And what is he, then?"

"He is the guardian genius of the hut. Nearly every one of us is thus protected. We call the genii in Forian, Damzog."

Upon this I feared and withdrew.

On returning from the Marrah to the Fasher, I went to visit the Shereef Ahmed Bedawee, who had brought me from Cairo to Darfur, and related to him

this adventure and my terror. "The man was perfectly right," said Ahmed, who went on to relate to me things still more wonderful. "At the time when I first began to trade, my friend, I often heard that damzogs could be bought and sold, and that to procure one I must apply to the owner of a damzog, and discuss the price with him. When the bargain is concluded, it is necessary to give a large gourd of milk to the seller, who takes it to his house, where are his damzogs. On entering he salutes them, and goes and hangs up his vase to a hook, saying,—'One of my friends—such a one—very rich, is in fear of robbers, and asks me to supply him with a guardian. Will one of you go and live in his house? There is plenty of milk there, for it is a house of blessing, and the proof thereof is, that I bring you this kara of milk.' The damzogs at first refuse to comply with the invitation. 'No, no,' say they, 'not one of us will go.' The master of the hut conjures them to comply with his desires, saying,—'Oh! let the one that is willing descend into the kara.' He then retires a little, and presently one of the damzogs is heard to flop into the milk, upon which he hastens and claps upon the vase a cover made of date-leaves. Thus stopped up he unhooks the kara, and hands it over to the buyer, who takes it away and hangs it on the wall of his hut, and confides it to the care of a slave or of a wife, who every morning comes and takes it, emptying out the milk, washing it and re-

plenishing it, and hanging it up again. From that time forward the house is safe from theft or loss. For my part, I believed all these things to be absurdities.

"Well, my wealth increased; but my slaves and servants constantly robbed me. Vainly did I have recourse to all kinds of means to prevent them; I was always duped. One day I complained to a friend, who recommended me to buy a damzog, certifying that I should be thus effectually protected. The desire of preserving my property induced me to comply, and so I went to a possessor of damzogs, and bought one in the way I have described. I appointed a slave to watch over the kara, and from that day forward I was free from care. I even left my warehouse-door open, and nobody in my absence dared to approach. I had there considerable wealth and abundance of merchandise. If anybody attempted to steal he was immediately prevented by the damzog. In this way he killed several of my slaves.

"My son, Mohammed, was now growing up. The love of women was his chief passion. He wished, in order to enable him to pursue his conquests with greater ease, to make some presents of beads and ornaments. So he watched a favourable moment, and one day, without my perceiving it, took the keys of the workshop and opened it; but he had scarcely entered it when the damzog broke his neck, and

killed him on the spot. I loved my son tenderly. The news of his death was a thunderbolt to me. My grief was indescribable. I inquired into the cause of his death, and was told that he was attempting to take my goods when the damzog killed him. Then I swore that the damzog should no longer remain in my house, and endeavoured to drive it away, but in vain. I took counsel of a friend, who said to me :—'Prepare a great repast, and invite a number of guests, warning them to come in a single troop, armed with guns and powder. They must all together fire a volley at the entrance of thy workshop, shouting aloud in Forian, 'Damzog ah aiye?'—Where is the damzog? The volleys must be repeated, always accompanied by the same cry, and the crowd must enter the place where the merchandise is guarded by the genius. In general the damzog is frightened, and flies away.' I performed this ceremony, and thanks be to God the damzog disappeared."

It has often been related to me, that among the great drums, or tymbals, preserved in the dwelling of the Sultan, there is one called the "Victorious," especially patronised by the damzogs, and that sometimes this instrument resounds when no one is near. This phenomenon announces that some great event is about to happen—some foreign or intestine war.

The habits and manners of the other tribes of Darfur, such as the Berti, the Dajo, the Bijo, &c., are pretty nearly the same as those of the people of

Marrah. If some of them differ by being more hospitable and benevolent, they owe this improvement to association with Bedawin Arabs, and of the merchants who come to them from Egypt and other distant countries. Those who received strangers best are those who speak the Arabic language.

CHAPTER VI.

Philosophy of Geography—Absolute Authority of Princes—Order of Succession—Old Women Counsellors—Strange Customs—Public Audiences—Servility—Barbarian Etiquette—Clothing of the Buaso—Superstitions—Festival of the Sowing—Court of Tendelty—A Perilous Office—Taxes—King of the Buffoons—Birds of the South—Music and Songs—Abd-er-Rahman and the Ulemas—The Yakoury—Queen Mothers.

In examining the different forms of empire, the varieties of tastes and habits, it is evident that the great Creator—may His Majesty be glorified!—has multiplied their different aspects in order to show us the immensity of his power and the profoundness of his wisdom. Moreover, God has impressed a different character on every climate. There are cold climates and hot climates, and temperate climates, according to their distance from the equinoctial line. If God had wished it, he could have made of all nations a single nation; but he has assigned to them dissemblances, in order to incite men to travel, and to learn that of which they are ignorant. Having stated these truths, let us come to the point.

The Forian princes have customs different from those of other princes. The sovereign of Darfur

exercises boundless despotic power. He may put to death thousands of individuals, and no one asks him wherefore. He may degrade whom he pleases, and no one asks him wherefore. His orders, however adverse they may be, are always obeyed, and no one resists, even by a word. The only resource is to cry for mercy; but, if the Sultan chooses to commit an act of injustice, the hatred it excites remains for ever concealed.

In Darfur the sovereign must be of the blood of the Sultans. No stranger, not even a descendant of the Prophet, can pretend to the throne. When a prince is invested with power, he rests for a week in his dwelling, without issuing orders of any kind. During this space of time no affair is brought before his tribunal. The Sultan Abd-er-Rahman was the first who derogated from this custom.

The Forian Sultans are surrounded by a kind of Aulic body, composed of old women, called Habbobah, under the orders of one of their numbers, called the queen. When the Sultan leaves his privacy of seven days these old women unite, bearing iron switches, about two feet long, which they clash one against another, producing a singular sound. One of them bears a kind of broom of date-branches, which she dips into a prepared liquid, and therewith, from time to time, sprinkles the Sultan, uttering certain mysterious words. Then they conduct the new prince from his private dwelling to the House of Brass, where the tymbals of the

Sultan are kept. Having entered, they take the Victorious tymbal and place it in the midst. The Sultan remains alone with the Habbobah, who continue to clash their twigs of iron, and to repeat their mysterious exclamations. After this ceremony they lead the prince to the place where is the imperial throne.

The movement of public affairs now begins, and the sovereign opens his Divan. He never addresses the ordinary words of salutation to any one, however great, except through the medium of an interpreter. Those who obtain audience place themselves on their knees, and an interpreter repeats their names, adding a form of word to this effect: "Such a one salutes you humbly." Having gone through the whole, he adds, "and their people or their children are behind them." Then the negroes, who are standing in the rear of the prince, begin to cry out "Salutation! salutation!" If the assembly is great, a large wooden urn, shaped like an inverted cone, and covered with a skin, called a dingar, is beaten. It gives a great sound, and is not used on any other occasion. On grand occasions, there are seven interpreters ready to explain the petitions of persons who come to ask for justice. The forms of salutation are very intricate.

The people of Darfur have many singular ways of expressing veneration for the majesty of the Sultan. Among others, whenever he clears his throat, his spittle is immediately gathered up from

the ground by his servants with their hands.* When he coughs, as if about to speak, everybody makes the sound of *ts, ts,* as nurses do to amuse their little ones; and, when he sneezes, the whole assembly imitates the cry of the jeko, which resembles that of a man urging on his horse to speed. In grand council, the Sultan is fanned with a large bunch of ostrich-feathers. When he goes out to hunt he is shaded by a parasol of the same material; and these insignia are under the special care of a high official. If the Sultan, being on horseback, happens to fall off, all his followers must fall off likewise; and should any one omit this formality, however great he may be, he is laid down and beaten.†

A strange ceremony is sometimes celebrated by the Forian princes. It is called the Clothing of the Buaso, and consists in renewing the skins of the great tymbals, called in Egypt Nakarieh. The ceremony is one of the greatest solemnity, and every year lasts seven days. In the first place, all the tymbals must be stripped on one day—which done,

* It is possible that some filthy custom of this kind, among our ancestors, was the origin of the contemptuous expression of lick-spittle.

† Read the private histories of most courts for instances equally absurd: the origin of high cravats, of shaving in some periods, of beard-wearing in others; of long hair, of short hair, of wigs, of pantaloons; of Protestantism, of Romanism, of adultery, and piety. The poor Forians, falling off their saddle, in imitation of their sovereign, would, perhaps, feel offended by this comparison.

bulls, with dark grey skins, are slaughtered to supply the new coverings. It is pretended that these bulls are of a particular species, and that, when they are about to be slaughtered, they lie down quietly, and submit without resistance. They are killed without the ordinary preamble of " B'ism Illah;" and it is said that they are thus held down and kept tranquil by genii. When they are slaughtered the flesh is separated from the bones and skin, and put into large jars of salt for six days, at the end of which other animals are slaughtered, and the flesh mixed. Tables are then laid out, and all the sons of the Sultan, and all the Kings, and all the Viziers, are invited, and compelled to eat. There are inspectors at each table to see that nobody fails; for if any one does so, it is believed that he is a traitor. No conspirator, in fact, *can* eat of this food. If any one keeps away, under pretence of illness, a plate of meat is brought to him, and if he declines to eat, he is seized. Many pretend that for this festival a young boy and a young girl, not yet arrived at the age of puberty, are slaughtered, cut up, and mixed with the salt meat; and it is added that the boy must be called Mohammed, and the girl Fatmeh. If this be true, these men must be infidels and barbarians. For my part, I have seen nothing of this ceremony, foreigners never being allowed to be present.

Before the meat is served up, a general review of all the troops takes place at the Fasher, and, after-

wards, the Sultan repairs in state, first to his palace, and then to the House of Brass. Arrived there, he takes a drumstick, and strikes three blows on the Victorious Nakarieh. The corps of old women is there still, beating their twigs of iron. If any Governor or Vizier happens to be away at the time of this ceremony, instead of the trial by meat-eating, he is subjected to the trial by Killi,—that is to say, he is compelled to drink water in which the fruit of that name has been infused. If he be not a conspirator, he immediately vomits; but, if he be guilty, he can drink a large jar-full without doing so. I have seen the experiment tried on a person accused of theft. It is possible that these effects may depend on some particular properties of the Killi, for in Darfur there are many plants of singular virtue, of which we shall speak, if it please God.

There is a remarkable custom, called the Festival of the Sowing, in Darfur. The Sultan possesses, as his domain, cultivable land, which is sown every year. After the rains, he goes forth in great pomp, escorted by more than a hundred young women, chosen amidst the most beautiful, and adorned with their richest garments and jewels. These women are the best-beloved of his harem. They wear upon their heads vases filled with the most delicate viands, and they walk behind the Sultan's horse with the young slaves, called korkoa, armed with lances, and with a troop of flute-players. They move on with music and singing, and even the young girls join in the concert.

When the prince has reached the open country, he gets out of the saddle, and taking different kinds of grain whilst a slave turns up the ground with a hoe, casts them in. This is the first seed that falls in the country where the Sultan then is. Afterwards the kings, viziers, the officers of the court, following the example of the Sultan, also cast in grain, and the whole plain is soon quickened for the harvest. This done, the dishes are brought by the young girls, and spread out before the Sultan, who begins to eat with his courtiers. Then the whole party get into the saddle again, and return in a grand cavalcade to the Fasher. This Festival of the Sowing is one of the most solemn in Darfur.*

The court of Tendelty is organised in a very complete and singular manner. The different dignitaries are named after different parts of the Sultan's body. The Orondolon, for example, means the head of the Sultan, and his duty is to march in the van of the troops; the Kamneh, or neck of the Sultan, is still higher in rank, but his privileges are counterbalanced by one extraordinary duty, viz. that of allowing himself to be strangled if the king happens to be killed in battle. After these functionaries come the backbone, and the right arm, and the left arm, each with different duties. The Ab-Sheikh, or Father-Sheikh, is above all the before-mentioned dignitaries in rank. He is almost the equal of the Sultan, and possesses

* A similar ceremony is celebrated in China by the emperors.

the right of life and death without control. There are numerous other officials, each with distinct duties. One of the principal is the King of the Door of the Women, or Chief of the Eunuchs. There is also the King of the Slaves, of the Custom-House, and of the Tax-gatherers. None of these officers receive any direct payment, but all have extensive districts assigned to them, from the revenues of which they are expected to supply arms, clothing, and horses for themselves and their soldiers.

The tithe of grain and of cattle belongs exclusively to the Sultan; but each of the governors has private property, which is cultivated by forced labour. They have also the right to impound and appropriate all wandering property, as slaves, oxen, sheep, and asses. All fines also go to them. For example, if one man wounds another, he pays so much for the blood spilt, all of which goes to the governor, whilst, if death ensues, only one-half does, the remainder going to the parents of the deceased. If a man intrigues with a married woman, both the guilty parties are compelled to pay a fine. It must also be remembered that all kinds of labour are taken by force, and used gratuitously.

I must not forget to speak of the Kingship of the Mauguch, or Buffoon of the Sultan. This is the least respectable office in the court, but it is sufficiently interesting to describe. The Forians have a natural tendency to pleasure, to gaiety, to games, and festivals. They pass no day without some entertainment;

kings and people share the same passion; and they have invented every possible means of enjoyment, and all kinds of instruments. Every king has a train of young boys, chosen for the beauty of their voice, and called Korkoa. They are supplied with pipes made of reeds, through which they not only blow, but sing, mixing up the notes and the words in a singular manner. They are accompanied by a remarkable instrument, consisting of a dried gourd, in which some pebbles have been introduced, and which are shaken in time to the notes and pauses of the flutes. Often the Sultan, on ceremonial occasions, causes this band to be followed by hisharem, bearing dishes; and on these occasions, a drum resembling the araboukka of Egypt, is added to the concert. There are masters in Darfur who teach both music and singing. The singers precede the Sultan in groups, one individual of which begins a stanza, while the others sing the chorus. On these occasions, when the whole crowd of horse and footmen are beating tambourines, or playing on flutes or pipes, or singing, the noise created is perfectly stunning. The flutes are called the Birds of the South, because in Southern Darfur are found many birds with agreeable notes, from which it is said the Forians have learned their style of playing.

To the above musical entertainment are added the songs of the Maugueh, who form a considerable corporation, having a special king. They have not

only to perform the droll duties of buffoons, but many others, and especially the horrible one of executioner. Commonly the Maugueh wear a kind of band round their heads, with a plate of iron on their foreheads, in which is loosely fastened a long horn or nail, which shakes and tinkles as they move. This is shaded by one or two ostrich-feathers. They wear iron anklets, and each carries a leathern bag in which to place these ornaments, as well as their tartour, or tall, conical cap, covered with shells and beads, when they have finished their sittings. In their hands they carry a crook, to which are suspended little bells.

Two or three of these buffoons generally stand up before the Sultan when he holds a divan; and when he travels or hunts several go before him, singing, dancing, mimicking the bark of a dog or the mewing of a cat, and uttering various absurdities to create a laugh. Their songs are in the Forian language, never in Arabic. Their dance does not consist of contortions of the hips, like that of Egypt, but they shake the head from one side to the other, and, striking their legs together, make their anklets jingle. When the Sultan is very far from the Fasher they cease to sing, but all together, at the top of their voices, cry, "Ya! ya!" as long as the prince is on horseback.

Every governor has buffoons of his own. These odd beings care little for the anger of their master. They have a right of familiarity, even with the Sultan.

They conceal nothing that they learn against the private character of the courtiers, but bawl out their scandalous stories in full divan. They have stentorian voices, and are also used as criers. They may often be heard after sunset screaming out in the streets.

The Sultan Abd-er-Rahman loved the Ulemas, and was frequently with them night and day. He never appeared in council without having one or two with him. This difference excited the jealousy of the Viziers. "What," said they, "does the Sultan prefer these fellows to us? Verily, after him we will take care not to put upon the throne a Sultan who can read and write." A Maugueh heard these words, and, dissimulating, waited for a day of public assembly. The Viziers were present, and the buffoon began to say, "Certainly, we will take care not again to elect a Sultan who can read and write."

The Sultan turned round and inquired, "Wherefore?"

"Because thou preferrest the company of the Ulemas to that of the Viziers."

Irritated at this observation, the Sultan glanced furiously at him, so that he feared for his skin, and added,—"I am not to blame, for I overheard these people," pointing to the Viziers, "say these words."

This created a scene of reproach and anger, and suggested to me this observation,—"The ignorant are always enemies of the learned."

Sultan Tyrab one day gave a great festival. The

Sultan began examining the dishes one after another, in order to see which were the best. Some of them had been prepared by the hands of the Yakoury Kinaneh herself. Tyrab tasted them, and, finding them excellent, ordered them to be reserved for the Ulemas. Kinaneh objected, saying,—"Shall I be Yakoury to cook for Sheikhs, whilst others cook for Viziers and Kings?" The King replied, that she would thereby gain the blessings of these holy men. But an altercation ensued; she swore by her head that the Ulemas should not taste them, and female perseverance prevailed.

I must add that the buffoons are generally chosen amongst the poorest kind of people. They go begging from door to door, always with success, for the great people fear them as spies. Whoever treats them well acquires their praises; but those who seem to check them are sure to be despised and scandalised. In this they resemble poets, who have incense for their friends and sarcasms for their enemies. The Yakoury is the mother of the Sultan. I have seen the mother of Sultan Mohammed Fadhl. She was an ugly slave, who would not have fetched ten dollars. I have also seen his grandmother, a hideous old woman, more hideous than any other in the whole country, and nearly imbecile. It was her pleasure, whenever she travelled, to be carried on a kind of stool on the shoulders of men, and surrounded by a numerous escort of soldiers. One day

she was told that the people said, speaking of her, "This slave tyrannises over and torments us." She caused herself to be carried to the divan, and cried, "The slave! The slave has brought forth silver, and silver has brought forth gold!" alluding to her relationship to the Sultan.

CHAPTER VII.

The Fasher—The Ligdabeh—A Race—Audience on Horseback—Tendelty—Fountains—Huts—The Palace—Police Regulations—Costume—The Litham—Materials of Clothing—Women's Dresses—Ornaments—Lovers—Jealousy—Intercourse of the Sexes—A Story of Love—The Sultan's Interference—War against Drunkenness—Marriage Expenses—Strange Customs—Buying a Wife—Betrothal.

The dwelling of the Sultan is in the interior of the Fasher; that is to say, the town or borough which is chosen for his ordinary residence, and the houses or huts of the inhabitants around. This dwelling-place has two external gates, one called the gate of the men, and the other the gate of the women. The first leads to the great divan, which is a shed built of wood, open on all sides. Large beams support the roof, which is made of fascines. The ceiling is now sufficiently high to allow a man upon a camel to ride through. Formerly, only a man on horseback could pass. It happened, one day, that two Arabs presented themselves, and quarrelled about their skill in camel-riding. It was agreed that they should have a race within the Ligdabeh, or divan. The Sultan and his courtiers went out and collected around to see this singular contest. The two champions started

off from a distance at full gallop. On arriving near the Ligdabeh, one of them leaped upon the roof, and, running along, dropped into his seat again just as the camel came out at the other side. The other threw himself under, and held on until he was also outside, when he swung up again into his seat. There was a great discussion as to who had gained the bet; but the Sultan decided in favour of the second. It was after this incident that the roof was raised to its present height. When there is a public meeting, the Sultan sits on an elevated seat, placed on a platform in the midst, with the Ulemas on the right, and Shereefs and great people on the left. When a solemn divan is held for the reception of ambassadors, or for a public festival, the platform is decorated with trappings embroidered with gold, and a stool of ebony, with a cushion of silk, is placed in the midst for the Sultan, who assumes an imposing and majestic air. All the great dignitaries and the seven interpreters have their appointed place. On some occasions, the Sultan gives audience on horseback, and has horses trained to remain for hours in the same posture.

Tendelty is now the capital of Darfur, and has been so ever since 1206, or 1791 of the Christians. It is built on a plain of sand, and traversed by a torrent, which joins the great stream of the valley of Kou. The rains of autumn fill it, so that it can only be crossed at a great distance from the city. Towards the end of winter, the greater part of the water dries

away, and wells are dug in the sand. The Sultan uses this water; but, as he fears that some ill-intentioned persons may cast a charm into the well, he sometimes, without warning, sends to the well of Gedeed el Seil, which is distant about a parasang to the east.

The dwellings of the Forians are generally huts constructed of millet-stalks, and are surrounded with a hedge of prickly bushes, at some distance, and by a second enclosure of millet-stalks. Wealthy persons possess many huts within the same enclosure. The wealth of a man is known by the whiteness and cleanness of his huts, and the inner enclosure. There are pens within the hedge for the flocks.

The huts are round, and resemble tents in appearance. They are of different classes and names. Some of them are surmounted by a stick, on which are three or four ostrich eggs, separated by balls of red clay. In addition to these, the huts of the Sultan are ornamented with horizontal bands of red and white stuff. Those of the women of the Sultan, and, indeed, of many wealthy people, have the external wall of mud, and the roof of a rare kind of reed, the possession of which is considered a sign of wealth.

The imperial enclosure is situated on a slight elevation, a little to the north of the torrent, and covers an extent of three hundred paces. The hedge is very thick, and is formed of three rows of prickly shrubs, with the spaces filled up by trunks of trees. The whole forms a regular palisade, surpassing the

height of a man, and is carefully kept in order. The gates, which are well guarded, are made of long poles tied together, and are fastened with an iron chain and padlocks. A great number of dwellings and offices are included within the enclosure. The women occupy a considerable space, and there are several sheds where slaves are engaged all day in grinding millet and wheat between two stones.

All the inhabitants of Tendelty are compelled to remain, invariably, in the quarter of the city where they are first established, from father to son. All people employed, also, are forbidden to change their place. This rigid rule is ever preserved upon warlike expeditions. Every one is compelled to encamp exactly in the same relation to the Sultan's tent, so that, in fact, at every halt, a miniature representation of the city is created. In this way, if the Sultan is in want of anybody, it is always possible to find him immediately.

The garments worn in Darfur are all light, but of various forms and colours. Rich people have black or white dresses of very fine tissue. The Sultan and other great people wear two long shirts of fine stuff, imported from Egypt, or made in Darfur. The white garments are very brilliant, and all clothing is kept perfectly clean. The Sultan wears a Cashmere turban on his head, which no one else is allowed to do. Moreover, he wraps up his face with a piece of white muslin, which goes round his head several times, covering his mouth

and nose first, and then his forehead, so that only his eyes can be seen.* The Orondolon and the Kanineh, and the male children of the royal family, also cover their face, except when they are in the palace. The Sultan is also distinguished by a gilded scimetar, by his sacred amulet box, by his parasol and fans of feathers, by his gilded saddle and stirrups, and by the peculiar trappings of his horse.

The stuff with which the rich clothe themselves commonly are muslin and English calico: silk dresses are only used on great occasions. The Forians, who are well off, wear a kind of mantle, in several different ways. Some curious stuffs are imported from the West: among others, the Gadany, which is black, with a shade of red. The dye used is indigo. People who can afford it wear drawers, and upon their heads the tarboosh, or red cap. The poor go bare-headed, and cover their bodies with a single garment.

The women wear a piece of stuff tied round the waist, and the young girls hide their bosoms with a kind of kerchief made of silk, of calico, or of coarse stuff, according to their means. All the girls wear round their middle a thick band and kind of kilt. When a girl is married, she wears a great

* This singular custom of concealing the face with the Litham, as a mark of sovereignty, is found in most parts of Central Africa. The whole conquering tribe of Touaricks, and, indeed, all people of Berber race, keep it up. I noticed it at Siwah.

izar, which covers her from head to foot. Most women have a ring in their nose, sometimes of gold, but often of silver or copper. It sometimes bears a few beads of red coral. Many wear great ear-rings of silver, six ounces in weight, supported, in part, by a string, which passes over the head. The poor thrust a little piece of red coral or a long bead through the hole in their nostril, and pieces of stick through their ears. They wear various kinds of necklaces, made of beads, of amber, of coral, of agate, and of glass. These, indeed, form their principal ornaments; but they are also fond of wearing little talismanic chaplets about their heads, made of berries, of beans, or of shells. The Forian women also cover their bodies with various strings of beads, load their arms with bracelets made of iron, of horn, or of copper, and the ankles with anklets. They use different kinds of perfumes: among others, the sun-bul, or *Spica Celtica*, sandal-wood, and myrtle. Great people carry musk-bags.

The Forian women make a kind of kahl with native antimony, but they do not put it inside the eye as in Egypt, but use it externally. They also colour therewith the eyelids of their lovers or their affianced, and for this reason many boys are seen thus adorned. It is the custom for a lover to receive some object of dress from his mistress, which he wears with pride, and never separates from. If any misfortune happen to him, he exclaims, by way of consolation,—"No matter, I am the brother (that

is, the lover) of such a one." Under similar circumstances his mistress consoles herself by similar words.

Jealousy is rare among the Forians. If a man find any one with his daughter or his sister, he rather rejoices than otherwise, foreseeing a marriage. When the form of a young Forian girl begins to develope, she is placed in a hut apart, where she sleeps alone, and he who loves her comes to see her when he pleases, and passes the time with her. Many unmarried girls bring forth children; and this is not considered shameful, even if an incest has taken place. The offspring, in these cases, is put down to the account of a maternal uncle; and, if it be a girl, the uncle profits by the dowry which the husband receives. It is impossible to prevent this intercourse of men and women. A father sometimes, if he be poor, is mobbed, or even killed, if he endeavours to preserve his daughter's chastity; and even rich people find it difficult to succeed in this. Whatever be the care taken, some lover will find his way in, disguised as a woman.

A distinguished man of Darfur once had seven sons and a daughter of perfect beauty. Many suitors presented themselves for the latter, but were refused. Time passed, and the young girl had recourse to stratagem, and introduced into her hut a handsome youth full of courage and resolution. They remained together as long as it pleased God. His parents, disquieted by his absence, sought for

him everywhere, but found him not. However, one day, having drunk deeply with his mistress, he became excited, and wished to go forth. "Wait until the night," said she. But he refused, and went out. It happened, however, that the father and his seven sons were sitting at the gateway of the enclosure, and perceived him as he approached. The father cried out to the gatekeeper to shut the gate, and to seize on the intruder. He was assailed and surrounded, but defended himself so vigorously that many were wounded. The seven brothers now ran towards him armed, in order to kill him. He begged them to stand aside; but they would not, and fell upon him. They fought for some time, but he killed six, one after the other, and wounded the seventh. Then the father cried out, "Open the gate!" and it was opened, and he escaped without a single wound. No one ever knew who he was. The young girl was thus the cause of the death of her brothers and the desolation of her family. Similar adventures happen often, and the women always refuse to betray their lovers. Great ugliness, or ill-health, can alone preserve a daughter to her family.

Sultan Abd-er-Rahman endeavoured to repress these abuses, but without success. He established a police of eunuchs to prevent conversations between men and women in the market-place, but they were deceived in a thousand ways. If a man, for example,

wanted to point out to a young girl, whom he found to his taste, where she might meet him, he would cry out,—

"Oh, ho! my lass, what's this? Thy ugly head is like the ugly top of that ugly hut."

"What ugly hut?" would the cunning girl say, in a tone of sham anger. "Where is that ugly hut which is like my head?"

"There."

So he pointed it out, and in the evening she was sure to come and meet him.

Abd-er-Rahman endeavoured, also, to put a stop to wine-drinking, but with equal want of success. He even went so far as to smell the mouths of his courtiers when they came to see him; but they soon found out that, by chewing the leaves of a certain plant, named shalaub, they could entirely take away the odour. The Forians are naturally drunkards, and religion has no power to keep them sober.

When a poor man is about to marry, and nobody of his family will give him enough to supply his bridal expenses, he goes out to the fields, where the herds and flocks of his relations are feeding, and slaughters as many as he wants. If the owner endeavours to repel him, he is sure to be beaten, and, perhaps, killed; but, generally, he cites the man before the Khadi, who condemns him to pay for what he has taken by instalments.

On the occasion of a circumcision, the very

young boys of a village are sent out into the neighbouring districts to kill all the fowls they can come near. No one attempts to interfere with them, for the law does not allow punishments to be applied at so early an age. A similar custom to the one here alluded to is practised in the case of young girls; and a very extraordinary method is taken among the poor to forestall the dangers of familiarity. During all these painful ceremonies, the girls are expected to suffer without complaint.

Very considerable dowries are given at a marriage, or rather a high price is paid for a wife. If the girl be pretty, her parents, even though poor, sometimes require twenty cows, and a male and female slave; but the father and mother keep all this for themselves. For this reason the Forians prefer daughters to sons. Daughters fill the stables, say they, but sons empty them.

Once married, a girl remains for one or two years in her father's house, along with her husband, who at last has great difficulty in taking her away. During this time all domestic expenses are defrayed by the wife's father; and whatever the husband brings is considered as a present. When a youth has been betrothed to a girl, however intimate he may have been with her parents before, he ceases to see them until the ceremony has taken place, and even avoids them in the street. They, on their part, hide their faces, if they happen to meet him

unexpectedly. He goes to see his betrothed in her own hut, and sends his compliments to her parents. After the ceremony he goes and kisses his father-in-law and his mother-in-law on the head, and becomes one of the family. From this time forward both wife and husband consider that they have two fathers and two mothers.

CHAPTER VIII.

Origin of Marriage — Apologue — Dowries — Ceremonies — Dances — Songs — Formalities — Festivals — Domestic Etiquette — Zikrs — Jealousy — Eunuchs — A Miracle — Impious Ab-Sheikh — The Sultan's Wives — A faithful Woman wanted — Arab Fidelity — The Queen Mother — An Adventure — Beautiful Women — Qualities of Black Women.

But I must enter into further details on this subject of marriage. When Adam woke from the light sleep during which Eve was taken out of his side, and beheld this new creature, richly adorned with grace and beauty, his heart was moved, and he admired.

"Who art thou, dear creature?" said he.

"I am Eve. God has just created me for thee, according to the dictates of his supreme will."

"Come, then, to me."

"No! It is thou who shouldst come to me."

Then Adam advanced towards her, and this was the origin of the custom, that the man should seek the woman. When he had sat down by her side, and touched her with his hands, emotion thrilled through his frame, and he became bewildered; but Eve said: "Stay, Adam: Eve is only legitimately given to thee as a wife, on condition of a dowry, and

a common consent expressed." Then God, in His Old Language, pronounced a formula of marriage, and said:—"There is nothing sublime but my grandeur; nothing imposing but my majesty; and all creatures revere and adore me. I take you to witness—you, my angels, and you, the inhabitants of my heaven—that I unite in marriage this marvel of my creation, Eve, to this first man, my image upon the earth; but on condition of a dowry—and this dowry shall be, that he pronounce these words: 'God is great; there is no god but God.'" Thus were established and consecrated the form and conditions of marriage for the posterity of Adam.

Every nation, however, has since modified the original custom, and the Forians also have their special forms. Among them the children — boys and girls—are generally mixed together. From a very early age they are employed in watching the herds, and are thus in constant communication. Many of them begin their intimacy at that time, and become linked in an affection which time cannot break. Love follows, and then the cares of love and jealousy; and at last the lover, egotistical in his passions, wishes to keep all the men away from his mistress. So he demands her in marriage, and the contract of union is drawn up in presence of witnesses, and the price of the bride, or the dowry, as it is called, is discussed. For some time afterwards the ceremony is deferred; but at length the day is fixed, and preparations are made for the

nuptial feast. Animals are slaughtered, drinks are prepared, and invitations are sent out.

Many music-women are hired to enliven the festival. Each of them carries under her left arm three tambourines, on which she plays, greeting every new troop of guests with a song in their praise. For example,—"You, who brandish the shafts of your spears, may death be slow to overtake you!—May the eye which looks enviously on you become blind!—you, who brandish the steel of your lances," &c.

I was once at a marriage festival where the women greeted me with these verses,—"The Shereef comes from the mosque with a book in one hand, and a sabre in the other; he bears away the Birguids into slavery!"

Those who give the festival meet the guests as they arrive, and sit them down in groups. Food is immediately brought them according to their dignity. Some, for example, are given boiled meats and roast meats; others, cakes, and the red wine called Bulbul—The Mother of the Nightingale. When all have eaten, they remain sitting in the shade until the heat of the day has diminished, and the shadows are beginning to lengthen. Then the young girls, in their richest costume, leave the company of the women; and the youth also, dressed out in their best, run to meet them, and they prepare to dance. The girls range themselves in long lines, in front of which lines of equal length

are formed by the youths; and the women, to the measured sound of the tambourines, fill the air with their songs. At this signal, all the lines of young girls begin to move and to advance with a slow, deliberate step, shrugging their shoulders in various ways, and crouching down with strange contortions and inflections of their bodies. Thus they reach by degrees the line of youths, which remains motionless opposite, until each comes face to face with her partner, when she begins to shake her head rapidly, and fan and brush his cheeks with her tresses, which have been carefully perfumed beforehand. Then the youths, excited by these blandishments, brandish their lances, and raise them horizontally over the heads of the girls, who begin to retire, still dancing, and are pursued by their partners until they reach the place whence they started. Here the young girls pass between the young men and go dancing back alone. If there happens to be among the spectators any young man whom a young girl wishes to lure into the dance, she singles him out, and goes gently dancing towards him, and waves her hair in his face. Upon this he shouts with joy, and brandishes his lance and follows her. This attention on her part imposes on him the necessity of giving her a banquet.

When the two lines have thus changed places, they begin to move at the same time, and meet in the middle, where the girls cast the whole of their hair upon the breast of their partners, who begin to *rakrak*, that is to say, to utter peculiar cries of joy.

The whole company is now half-intoxicated, but the dance continues until night-time, when the various groups separate and go to supper.

Besides this dance, which is called Delloukah, the Forians have the Gyl, the Lengui, the Chekenderi, the Bendalah, and the Tonzy, which is the dance of the slaves; but the dance peculiarly of Forian origin, and which is special chiefly to the inhabitants of the Marrah mountains, is the Tendina. Some of these dances are peculiar to certain classes. The higher ranks dance the Delloukah; the middle classes, the Gyl; and the inferior classes, the Lengui. In the latter, the dancers utter peculiar cries, or rather grunts, which resemble those emitted by workmen when chopping wood. In the Chekenderi, a young man takes the waist of a young girl, who stands before him with her back turned, in his hands. A young girl behind him places her hands upon his hips; she is followed by a young man, and thus a circle is formed. The dancers, leaning slightly forward, move with very little steps; the girls gently shaking their anklets in measure. This tranquil dance is accompanied by the songs of women who are sitting by. The Bendalah is a dance, or rather a game, peculiar to the slaves, in which they tie a string of large nuts to their right foot, and kick at each other. The Tonzy resembles the Chekenderi; and the Tendina is an exaggerated form of the latter.

Each kind of dance is accompanied by special songs. For example, in the Gyl, the following is

used :—"You banei, hei you banein ! The night is passing, oh, my Moutgal; my head is turning; the night is going, oh, my Moutgal ! yes, my head is turning !" The introductory words have no meaning, and form an arbitrary chorus. One of the singers sings the first and second lines, and then the others join in with, "Ana rasy indur,"—my head is turning. They go on to say : "The night is passing. Darfur (that is, the world, for the world to them is a great Darfur) is full of sorrows. Come and rest thy head upon my bosom." The complete meaning of another song is as follows :—"Oh thou, whom I love, thou bendest over me like a flexible branch, and passion draws us away and makes us breathe forth sighs ! Thou lovest me, thou preferrest me to the daughters of thy hamlet, and thereby thou shalt excite their jealousy against me, and draw their vengeance upon me, for they will believe that thou hast humbled them in my eyes ! Oh thou, whose love recalls the perfume of the sandal-wood, thou hast arisen like the odoriferous branches of that tree, and thou leanest over our dwellings, to shade them for ever; and happiness will always remain beneath thy branches !"

After the evening repast, the bride is promenaded, to the sound of the Daloukah, all round the village, and then led to the nuptial hut. Three or four hours after night-fall, the young men collect together and take with them the bridegroom, and, with songs and rakrakhas, conduct him to the

hut. They remain without, whilst the bride with her companions remains within. Then the bridegroom nominates one of his friends as Vizier of the wedding, of which he himself is the Sultan; whilst the bride within chooses a she-vizier, under the title of Meirem. The latter is then entreated by the young men to come out and speak to them, but she refuses for an hour or two, and then issues forth, when the Vizier approaches her and presents his compliments, and, in an amiable and polite manner, begs her to allow the bride to present herself.

"Who are you?" then says the Meirem, "Whence do you come, and of what bride do you speak?"

"We are strangers," answers the Vizier; "we arrive from a distant country, and will be delighted if the Queen would honour us and cheer us with her presence."

"The Queen is engaged," then says the Meirem, "and cannot appear; she has begged me to entertain all strangers and travellers who may present themselves. What are your wishes?"

"We all know," says the Vizier, "that thou art full of graciousness and bounty, that thou art a perfect woman; but we have a word or two to say to the Queen, and can say them to no other than her."

"Very good," responds the Meirem; "but what will you give to the Queen, and what will

you give to me, if she presents herself? For it is her custom to show herself only to those who give her a present."

"All that we possess, and even our life, we will give, if she desires."

This dialogue continues for some time, whilst the bride, concealed behind a curtain, is listening, and the bridegroom also remains silent. At length the Meirem consents to exhibit the Queen, and raises the curtain, and she steps forth, upon which the Vizier exclaims,—The Queen is for the King, but for us what remains?" Then the Meirem calls forth the companions of the bride, and says,—"My friends, I beg that you will treat these guests of our Queen, this night, in a proper manner." "Willingly," they reply. Upon which the Meirem, who knows who is engaged to whom, leads them forth one by one and presents them to their lovers. Several couples, thus brought together, pass the night conversing in the nuptial hut, and the others go and sleep in the house of some friend.

Next day, the bride and her bridemaids take a bath and perfume themselves, and the whole wedding party prepares for a new festival; and sometimes the rejoicings last for seven days, in the evenings of which there are always dancing and other amusements. If provisions fail, the men of the party spread through the neighbourhood, and kill what they want in the first flocks and herds they find. For this reason all the farmers, as soon

as they hear that a wedding is to take place, drive away their beasts to a distance.

It must be observed that the marriage is seldom considered as completely celebrated until the seventh day, and never until after the third. A husband always shuns the insulting epithet of the impatient man. Each day of temperance is dedicated to some particular person: the first to the father of the bride, the second to the mother, and so on.

It is a strange custom in Darfur, that the wife, under no pretence whatever, is allowed to eat in the presence of her husband, or of any other man. If her husband happen to enter whilst she is eating, she instantly runs away, under penalty of universal contempt. I once enumerated to some Forians the various liberties that a husband can take with his wife, and asked why she should not also eat before him. "What you mention," said they, "are very rational and proper acts, but for a woman to eat in the presence of a husband, to open her mouth and introduce food therein—ah, nothing can be more shameful!"

As I have said, the wife remains in her father's house until she has borne children; and if her husband propose to take her away, she may ground a demand of divorce thereon. In the early time of her marriage the wife never speaks of her husband by his name, but only as *he;* and if she be asked whom she means, she replies, *him.* When

she has had a child she uses the expression,—The father of such a one. The husband has no family expenses until after a year of marriage, and at every repast all the best food is first offered to him. During the night also, as long as he sleeps in the house of his wife's family, they bring him, in the course of the night, two or three supplemental meals; the first of which is called the undress meal; the second, the Tarna-jisi; and the third, the meal of dawn. These meals are served up to the husband by the bride herself.

At the festival of the circumcision there are also great rejoicings. The operation is performed by a barber, and if the patient support it courageously the father promises him a heifer, a bull, or a slave, and all those who are present make him some gift. It is on this occasion that the boys scour the country in search of fowls.

I shall now describe what is called a Zikr in Darfur, remarking, by the way, that, in common Forian life, the women are the life and soul of every thing that takes place, and that, therefore, they also take a direct part in this religious ceremony. The Darfur Zikr is of two kinds, one performed by the Arabs, and the other by the Forians. The former contains a variety of movements and change, and was instituted by a celebrated Sheikh. A woman places herself near the circle of the faithful, and sings a few verses, whilst the other women

simply look on, and examine who is most distinguished by his enthusiasm.* When the Zikr is in full swing, the woman becomes silent, and one of the men takes up the song. On one occasion, I heard a contest between two circles of Zikrs, in which the performers sung satirical verses one against the other. At another time, a woman ran into the circle, and began to chant:—"I will pour out for you a jar of merisch. I am without a husband, and I live at the other end of the village. Is there one of you who is ready for love?" The people of the Zikr were then chanting,—"Allah hai! Allah hai!"—God is living, God is living! but one of them substituted the words "Ana zany; ana zany!" —I am your man; and so the contract was made.

The people of Forian origin stand in two rows or in a circle, each one with a young girl behind him, and the women standing around chant in a monotonous tone these words:—"The green tree is created for the shadow of men of science and religion. Is it indeed true that we shall go to paradise? Yes, it is indeed true that we shall go to paradise:" and they also add these words:—"Oh Gabriel! oh Michael! every deed of goodness is a key of paradise."

Women in all countries have excited the jealousy of men. There have been known those who have been jealous not only of their nearest relations, but

* I once saw at Cairo a Zikr of the kind, in which a woman tood behind the performers and excited them by her singing.

of the night, of the day, of the eyes of the Narcissus, even of themselves. The poets have accumulated these exaggerations. One has said, "Oh, Narcissus, turn away thy flower; do not look at me, for I am ashamed to kiss her I love before thee! What! shall my cheeks grow pale in sleep, and thou still gaze?" Another has said:—"My eyes, myself, thyself, the place where thou livest, the hours that brush by thee, everything excites my jealousy. Grant me nothing, for, as I am jealous of thee against thyself, how should I not be jealous of myself?" And again, another:—"I am jealous of everything, even of my own thoughts, and one hand is jealous of the other."

It is the passion thus described that has given rise to the custom of employing eunuchs. The Sultan of Darfur has more than a thousand of them, and all the great people possess several. All these eunuchs come from Dar-roha, although from time to time one is made in the country as a punishment.

The eunuchs are celebrated for their cruelty. One day an Ab-Sheikh led out his soldiers on a hot summer's day, and forced them to remain in the sun whilst he was protected by a parasol, until they all suffered dreadfully, and some even died upon the spot. He did this for his amusement, and exclaimed from time to time:—"This is the day! this is the day!—the day of misfortune and desolation!" There were more than twenty thousand men present, but none dared to resist, until at length a pious Sheikh,

named Hassan-el-Kau, suddenly exclaimed, three times,—"Silence, impious man!" Upon this Our-dikka, which was the name of the eunuch, was seized with affright and fled, and the pious Hassan, lifting up his hands to heaven, prayed, and said, "My God, have pity on thy servants!" Presently a vast mass of clouds collected over head, and the rain fell in torrents, and the army was refreshed and dispersed. This day is remembered as a memorable day.

That which had provoked the pious indignation of the Sheikh Hassan was, that the eunuch had assimilated himself to God, by judging the crowd in the words which will be used at the last day of fiery resurrection. Our-dikka was a very ignorant man, and had never attempted to learn to read until appointed to his high dignity. The Sultan ordered him to take lessons, and he studied the alphabet for a few days. At last he asked for a Koran, and after having looked over it for some time, managed to make out the letter *waw* standing by itself.

"Is not that a *waw?*" said he.

"Certainly," replied his master.

"Now I know the Koran," exclaimed the eunuch, and he shut up the book and ordered oxen and sheep to be slaughtered, and caused the tambourines to beat, and gave a great festival on the occasion.

In spite of the number of eunuchs and their vigilance, the Sultan is often deceived by his slaves, who send out old women into the city to bring in beardless boys dressed in female garments. This

stratagem is the more easy, because it is the custom for all the young negroes to wear their hair long like women. In this way access to the harem is easy; and if God protect the youth he escapes afterwards, if not, he is massacred without mercy. In general no accident happens; but sometimes another woman betrays the secret, or else the Sultan in a jealous mood makes a general search through his huts.

At other times the women themselves go out in disguise, and the eunuchs often allow them to pass, pretending not to recognise them, because they fear their vengeance. The fact is, the women of Soudan are incapable of restraining their passions; and, indeed, it is not to be wondered at, that the Sultan and the wealthy men, with their large harems, should be often deceived, especially as there are a great number of persons who, from want of means, are obliged to lead a life of celibacy. I have already explained, too, how the education of the Forian women prepares them for debauchery.

It is the belief among the Forians, that if the city takes fire, the only means of arresting the progress of the flames is to bring near them a woman, no longer young, who has never been guilty of intrigue. If she be pure, by merely waving a mantle, she puts a stop to the destruction. Success has sometimes rewarded a virtuous woman. When I was in Darfur, a violent conflagration burst forth. The Sultan and all his court came and endeavoured to stop it, but in vain. Then a crier was sent about the city.

He passed through every street, exclaiming, "Is there any faithful woman here? Is there a single faithful woman to be found?" But no one came forward, and we must believe that none existed.

I must, however, mention, that conjugal virtues are far from being so uncommon amongst the women of the wandering Arabs in Darfur and its neighbourhood. These women, being more intelligent, are more religious and more faithful than the Forians. Among them there is far more propriety. An Arab woman, for example, who has a son in an honourable position, will abstain from any love intrigue out of respect for his name; but the Forian women not so. An intimate friend of mine, whose name I will not mention, has related to me that the mother of the Sultan Mohammed Fadhl, who was called Ambous,* once married her brother to a slave-girl of hers. The wedding was celebrated with great pomp, and an enormous crowd collected, of which my friend was one. "I was standing," he said, "looking on, when the mother of the Sultan appeared, surrounded by a troop of girls, elegant as gazelles. She was then thirty-five years old, and her countenance was the most hideous possible to conceive. I wondered why God had chosen so frightful a woman to be the mother of a prince. Having led her brother to the nuptial hut, she came forth jingling her anklets and her strings of beads, and, in the dark, I felt a cloud

* Previously called Anbousah. See p. 45.

of perfume surrounding me. She came towards me in the midst of her slaves, and, seizing my hand, led me away. I dared not resist, for fear of attracting attention. After proceeding a little way, she whispered that she was tired—she who, before she had been the mother of a Sultan, had been a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, complained of a walk of a hundred yards! I answered politely, and she led me into the hut and made me sit down, and, after some coquetry, seeing that I would not understand, said that she had a headache, and wanted me to repeat some verses of the Koran. I did so, placing my hand upon her forehead, and the odour of her perfumes troubled me; but suddenly I began to think of the danger, and trembled. So the queen, with whom I had been left alone, called out for one of her women, named Dera-el-Gader, who brought me a dish, which I tasted, and found so good, that I ate heartily; but suddenly we heard a great noise, and the servant came running, saying,—'The Sultan! the Sultan!' Upon this the women took me and shoved me out, and I was enabled to hide, although some one did cry out that a man was stealing away." Such was the recital of my friend, which proved to me that eunuchs are not sufficient to prevent women from having lovers if they wish to do so.

I shall here add, that each tribe and nation of Soudan has women celebrated for some qualities of beauty. The most beautiful women, however, are those of Afnan; after them come the women of

Bagirmeh, of Bornou, and of Sennaar; then come those of Wadaï; and after them those of Darfur. The ugliest, without exception, are those of Touban and Katakou. God has diversified his creatures in a marvellous manner; and to produce the effect of variety, little is required. Everything that is brown is not musk; everything that is red is not a ruby; and everything that shines is not a diamond; everything that is black is not charcoal; everything that is vermilion is not flesh; and everything that is white is not chalk. The coloured nations, whether they be black or bronzed, have beauties which the white people do not possess. It may be said that light and darkness immeasurably differ; but, verily, some admire the black colour, as this verse proves:—"Her dark complexion is full of charm and grace. Look at it well, and you will no longer admire the white and the rose-coloured. Yes! on account of my sweetheart, I love everything that is black. I love all Soudan on her account; I love even black dogs." I also, for a time, was a passionate admirer of negresses, and I wrote some verses to justify my taste, and endeavoured to prove that the whole beauty of a countenance is derived from the black parts of it—as the eyes, the eye-brows, and the moles. But afterwards I changed my opinion, and wrote against the poet Safty, who had argued that a black spot on a white face increased its beauty, whilst a white spot on a black face was a deformity. I showed, among other things, that the

truth is pure and white. To this Safty replied, that white was the colour of old men's beards, and also of shrouds—two things which frighten love away. Perhaps there has been much exaggeration put forth on both sides.

When a Forian takes an Arab wife, or *vice versâ*, it is noticed that the offspring is generally weak and short-lived.* Each people has a particular temperament, and, I am inclined to think that, as a rule, mixture of races deteriorates them. In Darfur and Wadaï it has been found necessary to have recourse to various means for preserving the lives of children. It is customary to bleed them on the fortieth day after birth, by scarifying their bellies on both sides. This operation is repeated at the age of three months. If it be neglected, the children generally die of fever and other diseases.

* In Egypt I have observed that, in spite of the great number of black concubines, there absolutely exists no class of mulattoes. The children almost all die young.

CHAPTER IX.

Mixed Marriages—A Malady in Darfur—Story of the Small-pox—Diseases—Medicine—Birth—Education—Climate—Cause of Depopulation—Food—Weykeh—Food of Poor—Hunting—Classes of Hunters—Bedawin Arabs—Speculation in Ostrich Feathers—Milk—Gold—Money—Salt—Apology for Money—Curious Money.

THERE is a peculiar malady in Darfur, called Aboulessan, or father of the tongue, which consists in the appearance of an excrescence at the root of the tongue, which it is necessary to excise.* Dysentery is sometimes cured by cauterisation round the navel. When convulsions are brought on by the malice of demons, who find a child left alone for a moment, it is customary, in Egypt and Tunis, for an exorciser to be called in to make invocations, and sometimes the patient is relieved, and sometimes not. But, in Soudan, this disease is treated by actual cautery on the forehead, and cures often result. The small-pox is common in Soudan. As soon as a person is attacked by it he is immediately removed to a hut

* The Sheikh gives a detailed account of the operation, as also of various other kinds of treatments for different diseases, which it may be curious for medical men to consult. I have no doubt that many barbarous nations are in possession of valuable medical secrets.

built in a lonely place—a kind of hospital, in fact, where there are servants who have already had the disease. The Bedawin Arabs are very frightened at this disease. A man of Birguid, named Othman, once related to me that, having had the disease, and having escaped danger, though his skin was still marked, he used to go out with his face covered with the cloth of his turban to protect him from the flies. One day, being thus veiled, a party of Arabs approached, and sent forward a man, who walked with a hesitating and uncertain step. When he was near he cried out,—

"Tell me, I pray thee, if in this village there be any one ill of the small-pox?"

"God preserve me," replied Othman, "from exciting in thee a dangerous security by a false answer!" So he uncovered his face, and the Arab fell at once to the ground with a great cry.

His companions ran forward and carried him away, and Othman fled, or otherwise they would have killed him. He afterwards learned that the unhappy man died in three days. The people of Soudan have a curious idea on the origin of the small-pox. They pretend that it is brought by a little animal, imperceptible to the eye, but which leaves evident traces of its passage on the ground. This insect fixes on the skin, and thus engenders the disease. I am told that its track consists of a series of round points, disposed in a single straight line, so, ...; and they say that, whenever this track is

observed in the morning directed towards any house, the small-pox infallibly appears there.

Syphilis is very common in Darfur, but not so common as in Kordofal, where people endeavour to communicate it, fancying that they thus cure themselves; whilst in Darfur people generally shut themselves up. Elephantiasis is common in these countries. Pleurisy is cured by a number of scarifications on the side. There are a variety of other diseases, many of which are fatal; but neither the plague nor phthisis is known. I may add, that the greater number of the therapeutic means used are surgical, and that they are often successful. There are oculists, named shallans, who devote themselves entirely to performing operations for the cataract, in which they are very successful. The doctors are generally old men who have studied carefully the effects of scarification and cautery. The medicaments they use are marvellously simple, consisting generally of tamarinds, honey, and cow's butter. The last-mentioned substance is used with wonderful success by the Bedawin Arabs to cure gouty pains in the joints. It must be added, that magic is often resorted to as a means of cure, and that the patients are treated by writings; that is to say, papers on which sacred words have been written. The most successful in this kind of treatment are the Fellatahs.

Women in child-birth are attended on by a number of old women, who are very expert in their art. A cord is swung from the roof of the hut, and

the woman remains upright, holding on until safely delivered. Eight days after the birth of the child a feast is given, a sheep killed, and the name bestowed. When the child is two or three months old, it is carried about on its mother's back, in her mantle, even during her hardest work. She continues to carry it in this manner even after it can walk, and, according to the general custom in Muslim countries, she gives it suck for about two years. Unlike the Egyptians, the Forians never marry their daughters until after the age of puberty. The betrothment, however, often takes place two or three years before.

Very little instruction is given to children in Darfur. The reading of the Koran, which is the only primary education, even in Egypt, is very imperfectly spread. One of the reasons is, that the children only go to evening-schools, for all day they are occupied in keeping the flocks and herds. When evening comes on they take their slates and go to school. Every one of them in his turn brings a fagot of wood to make a fire with, and the scholars sit round, and by the light of the flame pursue their studies for an hour or two. The result is general ignorance. The country produces scarcely any Ulemas, and those who do exist give but mediocre lectures on civil and religious law, and on the proofs of the existence and unity of God. Rational studies, that is to say, those which have for their object the sciences of human invention—the liberal arts, the

humanities, &c.—are nearly null; a few individuals only possessing a few simple notions on the Arabic grammar. The study of the rules of Arab phraseology, that of the delicacies and varieties of discourse, of tropes, of rhetoric, of logic, and versification, is entirely neglected, except by a few who have gone to study at Cairo. Great importance is attached, however, to the science of demons and magic. Medicine, among the Forians, is a branch of magic, which is cultivated most especially by the Fullans, or Fellatahs.

With reference to climate, Darfur is not equally salubrious throughout its whole extent, and in all its provinces. The most healthy part is the Gouz, or Country of Sand. The Arabs who inhabit it, and breathe its pure air, are full of force and courage; but it contains, unfortunately, little water. The most unhealthy country for strangers is the Saïd; and, indeed, all the great capital towns are remarkably unfavourable to health. In spite, however, of this prevalence of disease, the people of Darfur love their country and cherish their huts. However, it must be observed that, as there are few epidemic diseases in Darfur, the population is tolerably well kept up. Many men reach the age of a hundred, or even a hundred and twenty; and very old people are common, despite of wars, and domestic disturbances, and private quarrels. If it were not for these causes, and the murders which are committed in a state of drunkenness, or from jealousy, the population of Darfur

would equal in number the Yagog and the Magog, and the vastest plains would not be able to contain it. Some may object that the women, not being exposed to the same chances of death, ought to exist in greater numbers; but I believe that grief for the loss of their husbands, children, and relations, and the various privations and fatigues they are subject to, prevent their excessive increase. However, there are more old women than old men, even among the very poor. I have remarked that, in this latter class, the misery is so great, that the poor of our country would never be able to support it.

Food that is bitter and disgusting to us seems to the Forians exquisite eating. A little time after my arrival a dish called weykeh was set before me, and I was invited to eat; but this was impossible. My father, hearing of this, said to me,—"He who will not eat weykeh should not come into this country." However, for some time, he had prepared for me a few dishes that I liked, such as rice and milk. When we went to the Fasher to visit the Sultan, we were lodged by the Fakih Malik. At the first supper a bitter mess was placed before me. I asked what it was, and was answered,—"Weykeh, cooked with heglig." I found it impossible to touch it. Another dish was brought in, and with it came an abominable stink. "What is that rotten stuff?" cried I. I was told it was weykeh dandary, which was considered a great delicacy; but I could not put a single morsel in my mouth, and so Malik was obliged to send me

some fresh milk sweetened with honey. In the evening he asked me why I did not eat any of his dishes.

"The first," said I, "was too bitter; and the second was too stinking."

"My friend," replied he, "these kinds of dishes are necessary for the preservation of health in our country, and whoever does not eat them is in danger of disease."

The dandary is prepared with the residue of bones of sheep and oxen, which are thrown into a great vase full of water, and left for several days, until they begin to smell strong.* Then they are pounded in a mortar, and reduced to a sort of paste, of which balls are made as big as oranges. To prepare a weykeh, one of these balls is dissolved in water, strained and mixed with onions fried in butter, with pepper, salt, and other condiments.

The common food of the poor is millet, not winnowed. Their cookery is detestable; they use a salt extracted from wood-ashes. People a little better off live, for the most part, on milk and butter. They eat meat only from time to time, when an animal is killed, and sold in portions for so many measures of millet. The young men often go out hunting, and kill rabbits, hares, the gazelle, the wild ox, the fox, and the teytel. The latter animal has the form and appearance of a tame ox, but is not larger than a

* So the Forians, as well as the English, regard as a delicacy meat in which the process of putrefaction has commenced.

middle-sized calf. It has a couple of horns, one or two spans in length, nearly straight, and bent sometimes forward, sometimes backward. This animal is remarkably stupid, and only flies if it sees a great crowd of people; if one or two people draw nigh, it looks with a tranquil eye and does not move. If the Forians meet a teytel standing still in a plain, they generally cry, "Ya teytel, ya kafer!"—"O teytel, O infidel!" The beast looks at them with indifference, unless they endeavour to approach quite near. The teytel seems to be a variety of the wild ox, but is smaller; its colour is fallow.

Many people in Darfur gain their living by hunting. They are divided into two classes, and are generally workers in iron. They rarely appear in the villages, and form a caste apart, called Darmoudy. They are people without faith and without law, and it is dangerous to meet them in bye-places. The other Forians never seek to ally themselves to them by marriage. The first class hunts quadrupeds, as the gazelle, the wild ox, the elephant, the buffalo, the hyæna, the lion, the rhinoceros, &c. They dig pits, in which they place stakes, and cover them with slight roofings of branches and earth. When they catch an elephant, they take the ivory and the skin; the latter is used to make bucklers and kurbashes. Sometimes the Darmoudies use fixed lassoes to catch their prey; at other times lances and javelins.

The second class of hunters devotes itself entirely

to bird-catching. They seek principally the hoberah, a kind of bustard, which they catch with a worm and a line, like a fish. Small birds are taken by nets, to which they are attracted by millet-seeds. If a Darmoudy catches paroquets, or parrots, he pulls out the feathers of their wings and takes them home alive in a basket to sell.

There are some Darmoudies who go into the mountains to hunt various kinds of monkeys. The gun is never used either on this or on any other occasion. Some rich people keep a slave always employed in hunting; and I once tried to procure one who was clever, but did not succeed. The giraffe and the ostrich are hunted principally by the Bedawin Arabs, who run them down on horseback.

The Bedawin Arabs of Darfur and Wadaï are abundantly supplied with everything necessary to support life. They derive from Darfur or Wadaï only a little millet, some maize, and articles of costume. In exchange for these they sell their surplus of butter, honey, cattle, skins of wild or domestic animals, leather sacks, whips, or cords. Most of them are wealthy in butter and in honey. The latter is found in certain trees where the wild bees make their hives. The chase supplies the Arabs with many advantages. Ostrich feathers and rhinoceros' horns are so plentiful with them as to be of no value. When I was in Wadaï, a Fezzan merchant came there to buy ostrich feathers,

and applied to the Shereef, who had succeeded my father as Vizier, for a letter of introduction to the Sheikh, Shaw-shaw, chief of the tribe of Mahami, in order to induce him to hunt the ostrich for a moderate price. The merchant had brought fifty Frank ryals, or dollars. The Shereef wrote the letter for the Fezzanee, who departed for the district where the tribe was settled. On his return, he related to me his commercial expedition in these words :—" When I arrived, I was conducted to the tent of the Sheikh, Shaw-shaw, who received me with bounty and kindness, and gave me a tent of camels' hair, well furnished. He assigned to me a male and female servant, who attended me in all things. I had brought him a present, which he accepted with joy, giving me another in exchange, and I handed over to him my fifty ryals. He called together a certain number of his Arabs, and said to them,—'This man is my guest; he has come and confided himself to me, and wants ostrich feathers. Let those who wish to gain some of these dollars go forth to-morrow at dawn of day. Each zhalym-skin shall be paid half a dollar, and each rabdah-skin a quarter of a dollar.'*

"Next day, accordingly, the Arabs went out and brought me twenty zhalym-skins. I remained three weeks, and completed a hundred. Shaw-shaw put them on his camels, and carried them for me

* The zhalym has on each wing eight beautiful white plumes, and the rabdah eight grey ones.

to Warah, the capital of Wadaï. He gave me, also, a plentiful supply of provisions; as melted ostrich grease, honey, &c. At Warah I sold nearly ninety zhalym-skins for three dollars each, so that, without any fatigue, I gained a pretty profit."

Milk is so plentiful in Arab encampments that they can never use the whole, in spite of the quantity of butter they make, and are obliged to throw away a large portion. In the districts of the Rezeigat, the Red Masirieh, and others, the pools and ponds are all white with milk.

Very few of the natives of Soudan are able to distinguish gold from copper, or tin from lead. Gold-dust is sometimes used, however, as a medium of exchange. In Darfur there are absolutely no precious metals but such as are imported from abroad, and even the ornaments of women are principally composed of glass beads. It is not astonishing, therefore, that the Forians remained long without knowing the use of silver or gold coins. When commerce, however, became extended, they were obliged to invent some kind of money, and they first used rings of pewter, which they employed for the purchase of daily necessities. For things of a greater price, a long piece of stuff, about five yards long, and half a yard wide, is used. Slaves have also a fixed monetary value, according to their height. For example, a horse may be worth three or four sedasy, or slave, who, from the heel to the lower lobe of the ear, measures six spans. In Darfur

are known neither the mahboub nor the piastre, nor any kind of coin used in civilised countries, except the abou-medfah, or pillar-dollar. In the chief towns glass beads are used as money; and in the parts about Guerly they use the falgo, or cake of salt, prepared in a particular manner. There are three kinds of salt in Darfur,—the zaghawy, which is procured from the lakes of the same name; the falgo, which is of a grey colour, opaque, and rather agreeable to the taste; and the mydaoub, which is of a blood-red colour, and by far the best. At Krousa tobacco is used as money, and is called taba. It is pounded into a paste, and made up into hollow cones, about the size of a pear. By the way, I have read a piece of verses composed by one of the descendants of the Kaliph Abou-Bekr, the object of which is to prove that smoking is not a sin. These verses date from about the middle of the ninth century of the Hegira. I shall extract one or two verses:—

"The all-powerful God has produced from the soil of our country a plant, the true name of which is tabgha.

"If any one in his ignorance maintains that this plant is forbidden, say to him, 'How do you prove it? By what verse of the Koran?'

"This plant does not inebriate, and this is why God has not condemned it. Whence hast thou taken thy word of condemnation?

"If thou inspirest the smoke of the tabgha, it rejoices and solaces thee; but never forget to say

before the first puff,—B'ism Illah, in the name of God.

"And when thou hast finished, give praise to the single God, and this will bring upon thee abundant blessings."

In some places little bundles of cotton-twist are used as money, and at others strings of onions. At one market the iron head of a kind of hoe is employed; and in the Gouz the same purpose is served by handfuls of millet. In many places the measure of value is an ox; and they say, for example, "this horse is worth ten or twenty oxen."

CHAPTER X.

Productions of Darfur—Fruit—Trees—The Thlyleg—Nebks—The Ochan—Horse-stealers—Medicinal Plants—Seasons—Wind and Rain—Wonderful Plants—Herbalists—The Narrah—Its Magical Properties—Strange Roots—Robbers—Buried Sacred Books—Sorcerers—A wonderful Foulan—The Temourkehs—Strange Stories—A Slave-hunt in Dar-Fertyt—Sand Diviners—Prophecies that came to pass.

The Forians, in their autumn season, which corresponds to our summer, take advantage of the rain to sow the ground. It is probably on account of these rains, which are very heavy, that they generally sow neither wheat nor barley, nor beans nor lentils, nor chick-peas. In Darfur we found neither apricots nor peaches, nor apples, nor pomegranates, nor olives, nor prunes, nor pears, nor the sweet-lemon, nor oranges, nor almonds, nor nuts, nor pistachios, nor walnuts, nor the fruit of the service-tree. The principal thing cultivated is the millet; but they also cultivate different kinds of maize. I have already mentioned, that in some districts wheat is sown. In the pools, and in places where water stands for some time, rice grows without any cultivation, and the people gather it in in the spring.

Sessame is sown, but the grain is eaten, and no oil is made. Honey is common in Darfur, but the wax is made no use of. Houses are lighted by a kind of wood. Charcoal is never made.

Darfur produces some small water-melons, which are eaten either fresh, as in Egypt, or dried and steeped in water, so as to make a kind of sherbet. Onions, garlic, pepper, and various kinds of cucumbers are sown, and several species of vegetables are found in some provinces. The river Kou flows through a great valley, which it inundates in autumn, after which, when the waters retire, an immense quantity of bamieh springs up spontaneously. There is a kind of bean peculiar to Darfur.

The only tree in this country which resembles those of Egypt is the date-palm, which is found in some districts. One of the most useful trees in the country is the sheglyg, more properly the thlyleg.* There are two varieties, called the yellow and the red, on account of the colour of the fruit, which is about the size of a large date. The tree, by its stature and appearance, reminds one of the Egyptian sycamore. The leaves are slightly oval, and the fruit has a bitter-sweet taste, and a peculiar odour. It is prepared in a great variety of manners. Every part of the tree is put to some use. The young sprouts of the leaves are used as a seasoning; they are also applied to wounds, in a paste prepared by chewing, and

* I suppose this is the same tree as the tholukh, so often mentioned in Mr. Richardson's "Journal."

form an effectual cure. The green fruit, pounded in a mortar, is used as soap, and answers the purpose admirably; as, indeed, do the roots. The wood of the tree is burned in torches to light the houses, and produces no smoke. From it also are prepared the slates on which the children learn to write and read. When burnt, the ashes produce a slightly bitter salt, which is used for seasoning. In fine, this tree answers even more purposes of utility than the palm.

There are two kinds of nebk in Darfur, the fruit of which is used both as food and medicinally. The tebeldy is a great tree with a hollow trunk, in which the rain collects and forms reservoirs, to which the wandering Arabs repair to quench their thirst. Its fruit is used to cure diarrhœa. The cocoa-nut is found towards the north. The geddeim produces a small fruit, to which I know of no other equal. There are many other trees of useful properties growing wild about the country. Two kinds of cotton are cultivated.

The ochan is a shrub, the different parts of which are applied to different purposes. It produces, among other things, a kind of down, which is twisted into thread, and used to repair the water-skins, to make cords, and to stop leaks in leather sacks. The juice, when applied to the skin of an animal, makes the hair fall off. Horse-stealers use it to disguise the animals which they steal. The tree which produces gum-arabic is found in sandy places. The vast branches of the haraz afford shadow to a hun-

dred men. There are many trees which do not produce fruit, but are used only for timber. However, I will not endeavour to give a complete account of the vegetable productions of Darfur, because when I was there I was still young, and ignorant of botany.

The Fertyts, who inhabit the vast country south of Darfur, and who are idolaters, possess a tree called the gana, which supplies a very pretty wood, used for making lance-handles.

Among the remarkable plants is the kyly, which produces the fruit from which is made the ordeal liquor of which I have already spoken. The leaves of the shalob, when chewed, take away the taste of wine from the mouth. The dagarah is used as a medicine in ophthalmia. I once was at the market of Numleh, and, having handled pepper incautiously, put my hand to my eyes; a severe pain and great swelling came on, and I was obliged to stop at a village and go into an old woman's house, suffering dreadfully. My hostess, however, sent for some leaves of the dagarah, pounded them in a mortar, and dropped the juice upon my eyes, and I was cured by one or two applications.

The greater part of the trees and other vegetables of Darfur have their fruit ripe towards the end of autumn, which corresponds to the end of summer in Egypt. The rains begin at the beginning of their autumn; and I have learned from various points that it is these rains which assist in

swelling the river Nile. In 1841 of the Christian era the great Kadi of Wadaï told me that 1837, the year of famine in Egypt, was signalised by an extraordinary drought in his country. The rainy season is ushered in by great wind-storms, which roll enormous clouds from the east, raising also vast columns of sand from the plains of the Gouz. The horizon becomes also of a blood-red colour. Rain always follows, accompanied by thunder. During the whole of the season prodigious showers fall, accompanied by violent thunder-claps. When the lightning falls it commits great destruction. I have seen branches torn away from great trees, huts burnt down, and a man's arm broken. The Forians say that those who carry iron about them are never struck, which is exactly contrary to the opinion of the Europeans.

During the Darfur summer great winds prevail, which raise enormous clouds of dust, and vast mirages inundate the plains. It has been noticed that the showers which fall during the night are much more gentle than those that fall by day. Rainbows are common; I have seen five or six at the same time, some rising straight up in the air. The rains last about sixty days; if less, there is famine. In Darfur and Wadaï the names of the months are of Arab origin, without any reference to the denominations used by the Greeks, the Copts, or the Europeans.

I shall now say something of the marvellous qualities of some plants of Darfur. I do so with

some hesitation, fearing to be accused of falsehood; but there are some extraordinary things which must be told. The chief properties of these magic plants are in the roots. There exist in Darfur master-herbalists, who have scholars under them. They unite from time to time to go on expeditions, and climb the mountains, and plunge into the valleys in search of plants. They are called in Darfur, Magicians, and enjoy a certain reputation. They are all in rivalry one against another, and in strong competition. They keep their roots in horns of goats, rams, or oxen.

These roots are used for different purposes; among others, to compose what is call the narrah. When I was in Darfur, there was at Jedid es-Seil a certain man named Bakourloukou, who acquired an astonishing reputation by the magical power of his narrah. When any one loved a young girl who was too rebellious to his wishes, he used to go to Bakourloukou and buy of his narrah, and rub his face and hands therewith. Afterwards, when he met with her he loved, he passed his hand over her shoulders, or some other part of the body, and love at once filled her heart, and she could no longer live without him. Even if her parents refused their consent to her marriage, she eloped with her lover. Moreover, if any one had a request to make to the Sultan, and bought some of this narrah, he was sure to succeed. Bakourloukou obtained in this way an extraordinary reputation; and it became a saying

among the women, that he could obtain for any one two girls for five yards of cotton. One day a person who had some narrah came to see me, and wanted me to buy; but I refused, saying, "that I was young enough to please women for myself, and that I was in favour with the Sultan."

The Forians also possess roots by which they can do evil to their enemies. There is one which causes death if it be buried in the earth, in the shade of the head of the intended victim, who is at once struck with bewilderment and loses all consciousness, and perishes if a proper antidote be not administered. By similar means any particular member is paralysed. Others stun people by the smoke of certain roots, collected in a sleeve, which they shake in their faces.*

The Forians also possess roots, the quality of which is to overcome people with a singular lethargy. They are principally used by robbers, who penetrate with them by night into houses, and if they find the inhabitants awake shake them towards them three times, upon which God shuts their ears and they understand nothing. The robber then comes and goes without fear; and sometimes kills a sheep, skins it, roasts it, and eats some of it, and puts a piece of the liver into the hands of each of the sleepers, and goes away, carrying with him what he wants. A little after the people awake from their trance, and

* Chloroform?

ask one another what kind of man it was they had seen, and what he can have been doing. Then only they discover, but too late, the robbery that has been committed.

This employment of the mysterious power of plants is a thing known to every Forian. I once asked a learned man what he thought of these matters, and he replied:—"The books sent by God to the prophets, Adam, Seth, and Abraham, &c., have been buried in the earth, and God has caused these magical plants to grow above them. The winds spread their seeds to the four corners of the earth, and experience has discovered the strange virtues which have been communicated to them by the Divine Spirit contained in these ancient writings." For my part, I see in all these things works of enchantment and sorcery. The same effects are produced, in fact, by the magical force of certain figures traced in a certain manner, and by invocations of the superior and inferior angels. I shall relate some examples.

Persons of good faith and acknowledged veracity have certified to me, that in the war which took place between the Kaliph, son of Tyrab, and the Sultan Abd-er-Rahman, some partisans of the former, who were armed with guns, were so powerfully charmed by sorcerers on the other side that their weapons produced no effect. On another occasion, the Fakih Malik bewildered the sons of the Sultan and threw them into the hands of Kourra and Fadhl, against whom they had revolted.

The persons most celebrated in Darfur for their charms and magical doings are the Foulans, or Felattahs. One of them, named Tamourrou, used to perform the most miraculous acts. A person worthy of credit related to me the following instance: "I went with Tamourrou," he said, "from Jedid-kerio to the Fasher; the sun was burning hot; the magician was mounted on a camel; he took his cloak and spread it before him, and then folded it up, and, placing it on his knee, pronounced certain words: afterwards he threw it in the air, and it unfolded and remained spread over him and me like a parasol, as if held by invisible hands. Wherever Tamourrou's camel moved it followed. This was an extraordinary fact. Well, we were proceeding on in the shade, when suddenly the rain came on and fell in torrents. Upon this Tamourrou said to his servant, who was following him on foot: "Give me a handful of sand;" and having pronounced certain words, whirled his hand round his head in a circle, scattering the sand as he did so. The rain-cloud immediately separated, one part going to the right and the other to the left, and we continued our route without having a thread wetted."

It is also related that some people have the power of paralysing whoever attempts to attack them. But the most extraordinary facts are those which are related of the Massalits and the Temourkehs, who have the power of metamorphosing themselves into different kinds of animals. All the

Forians say that the former can change into hyænas, cats, and dogs, and the latter into lions. Another extraordinary thing related of the Temourkehs is that, according to their own account, three days after their death, they resuscitate and come out of their tombs, and go into other countries to marry again, and accomplish a second life.

In Darfur, every one acknowledges that the Sultan has under his orders a number of men having the power of metamorphosing themselves. They are used as agents and ambassadors. If they are in danger of being seized, they transform themselves into air or wind. I once became very intimate with one of these people, and at length ventured to speak on the subject of his wonderful power, but he turned aside the conversation, and avoided a direct answer. Another time I pressed the question closer, upon which he smiled and said :—"I did not think you were so simple as to believe all that is said on this subject." Then he talked of other things, and soon left me, and from that time forward, whenever he met me he turned aside, and our acquaintance utterly ceased.

I was once following a Ghazwah, or slave-hunt, directed against the Fertyts by a king. As he owed me a debt, he took me with him to pay me from the slaves he was to capture.* We advanced far into Dar-Fertyt, and remained there three months, in a

* This royal way of paying debts appears to be common in Soudan. See the exploits of the Sarkee of Zinder, in Richardson's "Journal."

place without fruits or vegetables. One day the king sent for me, and I found him surrounded by green onions and long cucumbers, as fresh as if just plucked from the garden. I asked who had given them to him?

"They arrived from Darfur," said he.

"Who brought them? and how can their freshness have been preserved?"

"They have been transported hither in an instant —look at this letter, and see the date of it."

I took the letter, and found that it was from one of his friends in Darfur, and that it was dated the same morning.

"Do not be so surprised," said the king, "for we have with us men of Temourkeh, who have the faculty of transforming themselves as they please, and of traversing the greatest distance in a very short period of time."

"I should wish," said I, "to see some of these people."

"You shall," said he; and accordingly, on our return, we passed through a village of the Temourkehs, and stopped there to pass the night. In the morning the people came to visit the king, and the chief said to him,—

"I beg, if you see any lions on your way, not to attack them, for they are our companions metamorphosed."

"But," said the king, "I should like to hear some of them roar."

"The thing is easy," replied the Temourkeh; and he called three of his men by name, and they came near him, and then went away and disappeared in the plain. Presently we heard a roar that made us tremble, and the other animals exhibit their fear.

"That," said the Temourkeh, "is such a one;" and called him by his name. Two other roars, each more terrible still, were heard, and then the sham lions came back in their human shape. They kissed the hands of the king, who felicitated them, and made them presents of new garments.

"Well," said he, afterwards, to me, "you have seen these men; it was they who brought us the onions and the cucumbers in the solitudes of Dar-Fertyt."

I must not omit to mention the sand-diviners, who discover things that are both past and future. I had once reason to believe in their predictions, on the occasion of my journey from Darfur to Wadaï. I knew a man, named Salem, who had a son-in-law named Ishak, who was very learned in the service of the sand. I did not know how to provide for the expenses of my journey, and went to this magician, who performed his calculations and uttered his prophecy. I did not believe him at first, but I swear, before God, that everything he predicted to me was realised to the letter, as if he had read in the book of destiny. He answered to me that I should succeed in departing for Wadaï, with all those who composed my house, except my father's wife, who would remain

in Darfur. I said this was impossible, because she was most interested of any of us in our departure. But it came to pass that my father's wife refused to go, and escaped on the eve of departure, leaving to us her daughter, aged about seven years. We never knew what became of her. Ishak also said to me, —"The day that you arrive in your father's house at Wadaï you will receive a young slave answering such a description, but you will not find your father until you come to Tunis. The house of thy father is red." These and other predictions were fulfilled to the letter.

Whilst we were with Ishak many women came, in a state of great excitement, to learn where they might find things that had been stolen from them. He pointed out the place, but refused to betray the robbers.

My uncle Zarouk once related to me that my father lost a camel in the desert, and found it by means of a sand-diviner; and many other curious things are told. However, I shall not enter into further detail on this subject, for God only knows what is true.

END OF PART I.

Part II.—WADAÏ.

CHAPTER I.

Long Residence of the Sheikh in Wadaï—Message from his Father—The Sultan opposes his Departure—He is Imprisoned—His Slaves begin to desert him—His hard Case—The Sultan going his rounds—He returns to his Land—A King's Journey—The Sheikh receives permission to depart—Annoying Delays—March of an Army in the Desert—The Travellers are abandoned—Night in the Wilderness—Wadaïans—Safe Arrival and Reception.

After my father left Darfur I remained there seven years and some months, during which time I visited many places, and rested under many trees, wandering hither and thither, mixing with the inhabitants, sometimes going to the north and sometimes to the south. Everywhere I was received by the principal persons of each country, and I made a point of seeking the society of all men at all remarkable for instruction. I examined everything, great and small, and from whomsoever seemed to possess any interesting notions I begged the dew of his knowledge and the rain-shower of his learning. In a

word, I did my best to obtain information of every kind, both from persons of high and low degree.

When I had gathered what I desired of this kind, I thought of taking a little rest, and of earning some gold and silver. I was tranquilly established in my village, occupied with my agricultural speculations, enjoying what God had bestowed upon me, and endeavouring to increase my well-being, when I received a letter from my father, announcing his approaching departure from Wadaï to Tunis. "I want," said he to me, "to see my mother again, and I wish not to leave in Soudan any of those who are dear to me. On receipt of this letter hasten to join me. It is my wish that we should all set out together. Bring with thee thy family, and come immediately. Salutations." So I immediately prepared for departure, and was ready in a few days. Little did I think of what Fortune had in store for me.

I departed with my family from the village where I was established, and repaired to Tendelty, to obtain my leave of absence. But, on reaching the Fasher, I learned that the Sultan of Wadaï was marching against Dar-Tamah, a country situated to the west of the northern provinces of Darfur. It is of considerable extent, and bristles all over with mountains. Its Sultan acknowledges himself as a vassal of Darfur. The news of this expedition had just reached Tendelty; and it was said that the Sultan of Wadaï intended, if he were successful, to

pursue his conquests, and attack Darfur itself. These reports had much disquieted Mohammed Fadhl, who was making preparations for war, and levying a great army. There could be no worse time for me to make my request. However, I presented myself at court, and asked permission to go and join my father. Fadhl frowned terribly, and turned away his head, and the tranquil air with which he had been discussing business entirely disappeared.

"Thy father," said he, with a severe aspect, "is verily singular in his way of going on. Does he imagine that we cannot divine his intentions? Does he think to deceive me? He wants to have thee by him, and enjoy thy presence, because his new Sultan is advancing against us, and is about to enter this country with his army. His object is to save thee from the dust and the danger of battle. But no! thou shalt not depart. Thou shalt not procure him this pleasure."

Then the Sultan ordered the Sheikh, Abdallah Dagasa, to keep watch over me until the conclusion of the war. This Sheikh had succeeded Kourra in the post of Ab. He shut me up, with all those who were to have departed with me, in a house opposite his own, and ordered ten of his people to watch me. These ten gaolers came with their baggage, and installed themselves at the entrance of my prison, and under the eaves of my hut. For my part, I was forbidden to cross the threshold, though my people could come and go as they pleased. Two sentinels

kept watch all night. God knows what sadness overwhelmed me, and what dismal thoughts soon filled my mind. I succeeded, however, in gaining the friendship of the chief of my guardians, by inviting him to eat with me. He was naturally a good person, and treated me with politeness. Whenever I rose he rose also, out of respect.

My store of provisions was soon exhausted. I asked permission to send some one to my village to get a fresh supply, but this was refused me, by the influence of Fakih Malik. I was therefore obliged to make up my mind to sell some of my slaves, and they at once began to hate me, though they had formerly exhibited the greatest attachment. A young girl escaped from the prison, and I could not learn whither she had gone. I wished to go out by day to seek for her, but my guardians dissuaded me, saying that it would be wiser to go by night. I went, therefore, after sunset to Fakih Malik, and informed him of the loss of my slave, with tears in my eyes. The Fakih seemed to sympathise with me, but said I was imprudent to venture out of prison, and that if the Sultan came to know of it he would punish me severely, for his anger against my father was still great. He added, however, that he would do his best for me, and promised to cause my beautiful slave to be sought for. I then told him that my provisions were exhausted, and that from care I could sleep neither night nor day. I had already been obliged to sell one slave-girl to have

wherewith to feed my people. "Is it true," I asked, "that the Sultan refuses me permission to send to my village for provisions?" "I promise," replied he, "to obtain for thee what thou desirest. I swear to thee by the god of this dark night." I testified my gratitude to Malik, and went away satisfied with his reception and his promises. But I waited several days in my prison in vain, and felt that I had been deceived. Then I wrote to him a letter, in which, having spoken respectfully, like a son to his father, I reminded him of his promise, and told him that I had no longer either provisions or money; that the price of the slave sold was spent; and that I had no longer even wherewith to eat. One of my guards carried this letter, and returned soon afterwards with an answer, in which, after the usual form of politeness, he said to me:—"A prudent man puts by sufficient for the hour of want. Do as thou pleasest. I have begged permission for thee of the Sultan, and thereby roused his anger, so that he gave me no direct answer. Wait until God creates more favourable circumstances. His providence watches over all. Know, also, that if thou wert not of the noble blood of the Shereefs it would have gone harder with thee. Salutations."

On receiving this letter I was overwhelmed with grief; but resignation was the only thing left to me. Some days afterwards, two slave-girls and a male slave escaped from my prison. Then I repented

me that I had not already sold all my slaves. Their flight drove me to despair, and I was devoured by disquietude; but I wrote no more to Fakih Malik. I had now only left a slave-woman, blind of one eye, who had been the concubine of my uncle, another woman, who was my own concubine, and two Sedasy slaves. One morning I missed my concubine. She also had fled. This last blow was too much. I felt like the bird that has no longer any means of escaping from its cage. I called the chief of my guards, and related to him my sorrows. He was saddened, and he sighed and groaned, and, at the same time, endeavoured to console me.

When the night came I went out with one of my guards, once more determined to seek an interview with Malik, and to lay my case before him. We had not gone far when a troop of horsemen came riding down the street, and were close upon us before we observed them. The Sultan himself was making his rounds through the city, and distributing patrols and guards to prevent spies from penetrating into the capital. Whoever on these occasions was found, without being able to give a good account of himself, was put to death. Many thus lost their lives. The expedition of the people of Wadaï against Tamah was the reason of this unusual rigour.

When we were met by the cavalcade of the Sultan, some one cried out,—

"Who goes there?"

I answered, "The Shereef, son of the Shereef Omar of Tunis."

"Stop," said the horseman; "here is the Sultan."

I stood still, and the troop gathered round me, reining in their horses. I was alone, for my companion, at the first sound of the trampling of hoofs, had fled away like a bird. The Sultan drew nigh. Happily for me there was with him one of his viziers, with whom I was intimately united in friendship, named Suliman Tyr. Then the Sultan said to me,—

"Who art thou?"

And the man who had hailed me at once put in,—"This is the man whose father is at Wadaï."

"And why art thou abroad at this hour?" said the Sultan.

Then I laid before him my misfortunes, and spoke of the loss of my slaves, and of all I possessed. My teeth chattered for fear.

"But," said the Sultan, "did I not set a guard over thee?"

"Yes, prince, and that is the cause of my misfortune. I am kept in prison, but my slaves are allowed to fly, and none remain to me. I wished to take advantage of the darkness, to go forth and visit Malik, and lay before him my case, in the hope that he would speak to your majesty, and that you would order either my deliverance or my death; for it is better to die than to live in this anguish."

"How is that?"

"Prince of the faithful," replied I, "I no longer possess anything—neither provisions nor slaves. I have passed many days without eating. I have so suffered from hunger that I can no longer sleep. In a moment of fever I have stolen a handful of millet from a measure set before an ass, and devoured it like a beast of burden. I am in despair. Misfortune holds my two hands down in the dust."

Then Suliman Tyr came forward, and bent his knees, and begged, in the name of our friendship, that I should not be made responsible for the faults of my father, but that I should be restored to liberty. His pleading was so eloquent, that the Sultan was afflicted, and said,—

"I take away thy guards, and restore thee to liberty; but thou shalt not depart from Tendelty until I am well assured that the Sultan of Wadaï has given up the idea of warring upon us, and has returned to his country."

These words recalled me to life, and calmed my sorrows, and I said,—

"I beg that your majesty will allow me to return to my estates, to take wherewith to live. I have suffered all that can be suffered. Perfumes are for wedding-nights, not for other nights. I only ask what is absolutely necessary. Grant me this grace, and may God reward you."

The Sultan acquiesced in this demand, and allowed me full right over my property; so I returned full

of joy, happy at having attained my object, and being delivered from my prison. It was now four months from the commencement of my captivity. I quoted the words of the Prophet,—"If Sadness enters the lizard's hole, Joy follows it, and drives it out." I passed the night most tranquilly, and in the morning my guards were taken away, and I felt myself at liberty. I went immediately to see Malik, who congratulated me on my deliverance, but was in reality grieved and disconcerted.

I then sent to my village for grain and provisions for me and my people, and remained at the Fasher until the season when the rain began to fall in torrents. Then I received the order to go to Aboul-Joudoul and remain there. So I departed, and, returning to my old dwelling, began to cultivate my land, and, above all, to sow millet, which forms the principal food of the Forians. The seed-time was favourable, and every one predicted for me an abundant harvest. My fields were magnificent, and the village envied me.

Some time before the harvest season I was visited by one of the kings of Darfur, who invited me to accompany him on a journey he was about to make. I allowed myself to be persuaded, and departed from Aboul-Joudoul, in hopes to acquire this king's good-will. After one day's journey we reached a country where were many relations of his, and stopped to pass the night. He was detained there the next day and treated to a mag-

nificent repast. Nothing could exceed the politeness with which I myself was entertained. I was full of joy, when suddenly there rode up to us one of the Sultan's special couriers, and, having saluted the company, said,—

"Which of you is the son of the Shereef Omar?"

"I am the man," replied I; "at thy service."

"The Sultan asks for thee. Take the trouble to come to the Fasher."

"Willingly," said I; but it was evident to all that I was troubled. The king said to me,—

"Wherefore this fear?"

"It is because I am ignorant why the Sultan sends for me."

"This," said he, "is no cause of disquietude; why shouldst thou torment thyself?"

However, I still remained uneasy, and when night came went forth secretly and ordered my slave to saddle my horse, and, departing with him, rode all night, and by dawn of day reached Aboul-Joudoul. Here I learned that the courier had been in search of me. I took provisions, issued my orders, and, getting upon another horse, pushed on to Tendelty without stopping. On arriving, I went to the house of Malik, who received me graciously, and said,—

"The Sultan, our master, consents to thy departure. Thou art free; he leaves thee to do as thou wilt, except that thou must be ready to go

in a week. Return to thy house, take thy family, and depart with the swiftness of a bird."

"But," said I, "my fields are sown, and we are on the eve of the harvest. Will not the Sultan allow me time to gather in my crops?"

"Listen to me," he replied; "the Sultan, our master, is going to send the Fakih Ahmed Abou-Sarrah as an ambassador to the Prince of Wadaï. It is his desire that thou shouldst depart with this expedition. If thou wilt take advantage of this opportunity, prepare at once. Think well of the matter, for at a future time it will not be possible for thee to leave Darfur. As for thy crops, care not for them. However, thou art wise enough to choose for thyself."

I accordingly agreed to go, and returned to Aboul-Joudoul to get ready. I abandoned, though unwilling, my crops, which would have been very profitable, and made a present of them, before witnesses, to one of my servants. Then I returned with my family to the Fasher, and waited upon Malik, who handed over to me a passport signed by the Sultan, recommending me to all the chiefs by the way. We had special orders for the governor of the western province, by which we were to leave Darfur, requesting him to accompany us with his soldiers until he brought us to a place of safety. "Take this order," said Malik, "and go and join Sarrah, who waits for thee at Kel-

kabieh." I took the paper, and having thanked Malik, bade him adieu.

Next morning I set out, and arrived in two days at Kelkabieh. I stopped at Sarf-el-Degaj to see Ahmed the younger, son of Ahmed Bedawee, with whom I had come from Cairo. I remained with him twelve days, whilst we waited to collect a sufficient number of travellers for Wadaï. Then we set out, taking the direction of the western province, that is to say, the province of the Massalit. We reached it in five days, and on the sixth presented ourselves before the king of the province, and showed him our firman. He received us well, and promised to accompany us with his troops, and to leave us only when we should be out of danger, but he would not depart, he said, before thirty days were over. We laid before him our remonstrance, to the effect that this delay would be too long, and that our provisions would be exhausted; but he told us that he had business to perform which rendered it necessary for him to remain. We flattered him, and, so to speak, scratched his head to soothe him, as the camel-drivers soothe their beasts; but he remained obstinate, and we were compelled to tarry in that country until the thirty days had expired. Then we presented ourselves before him, and reminded him of his promise; but he put us off once more for three days, swearing that he would then set out. We waited until the

three days passed, and threatened to return. Then he got into a passion, and made loud complaints, and invented all kinds of explanations. "This time," said he, "in three days I will depart without fail. God is the hope of us all, and he will relieve me from my embarrassments."

We agreed, however unwilling, to wait, and these other three days being passed, presented ourselves to him, and said,—"The honest man performs what he promises, and clouds give rain after thunder." This time he set out with us, followed by some of his troops and guards. Our caravan marched under his protection for three days, which, such were his attentions to us, seemed like a continued festival. But the fourth day we halted upon one of his estates, at the extreme limit of the province. Here he spent the whole week collecting his soldiers, horse and foot. New embarrassment on our part, new delays—we feared again to see our journey put off.

However, every day new additions were made to our company; troops of men came flocking in from all sides; and our encampment resembled that of an army. One morning he looked abroad and saw that he had sufficient strength, and ordered the camels to be laden, and gave the signal of departure. It was still early when we started; our caravan was placed in the middle of the army, which marched in one mass. Presently we got beyond the cultivated country, and entered the uninhabited

districts which separate, like a wall, Darfur from Wadaï. In this wilderness we beheld an innumerable quantity of wild animals, from the elephant down to the gazelle and the hare. The hares, frightened by the noise we made in marching, started up from their covers, and flying on all sides, as if blind, came some of them into the midst of the soldiers, who killed them nearly at their feet. A great number of gazelles and other animals, bewildered by this invasion of their territory, were killed without trouble. The army amused itself thus with hunting until the great heat of the day had passed, when the king set up his tent, and all by degrees followed his example. Fires were lighted over the whole surface of the plain, and all the game taken was roasted. The meal finished, and the heat somewhat subsiding, we again set out; but suddenly our progress was arrested, and the vacillating governor rode up and informed us that he intended to return. I alone dared to make an objection. "If thou returnest," said I, "we will return with thee. We will not remain here, unescorted, in the midst of these solitudes." He endeavoured to excuse himself, alleging his numerous occupations, but we insisted that our safety should be provided for. Then he gave us one of his suite as a guide, with an escort of fifty or sixty horsemen, and told him to accompany us until we were in safety, and until we sent him away. Then we bade adieu to the king, who immediately

set off at a gallop, followed by the great mob of his army, and returned towards his country, and as we pursued our way in the other direction their murmur and trampling soon no longer came to us, and the last stragglers disappeared amidst the trees. Our guide escorted us for some hours, and then pulled up and told us that he intended to leave us. We made what opposition we could, and repeated to him over and over again that we were without means of defence; that four armed men would be sufficient to destroy us; and that, if anything happened to us, our blood would be upon his head. "Nay," said he, "I will not proceed, for you are now near the cultivated lands of Wadaï; and we are afraid, on account of our enemies. If they perceive us, blood will be spilt, and it will be your fault." We conjured him in the name of all the saints and of all the prophets, and exerted ourselves to persuade him to accompany us a little farther. He yielded; but scarcely had he escorted us a quarter of an hour more when he and his companions again reined in, and said that they would not advance a single step farther. He swore that he had never led out his escort to so great a distance before, and, having given us a guide, and received our adieus, galloped off and left us. Then fear entered our minds: every bush, every clump of trees, seemed to us to be men approaching to kill us. Uneasiness blinded our eyes; night was coming on; there seemed to be no longer a single

drop of blood in our veins, so greatly were we terrified.

Darkness came over us in the middle of a forest. We made our camels kneel down, and hastened to collect wood and light great fires all around to keep off the lions. We passed a melancholy night of fear, ever on the watch. Only few of the most stupid were able to sleep; for the roaring of the lions and the howling of the wolves and the hyenas continually filled our ears. Sometimes also the crashing step of an elephant made us shudder for our safety. We saw an incredible number of these huge animals in the forest; on the ground, moreover, were spread on all sides great quantities of tusks, which had grown yellow in the sun, and even black. We observed some enormous ones, sufficient of themselves to lade a good camel; others were split in two, or covered with crevices in an incalculable number.

During the night we kept good watch, and the next day, before sunrise, we had laden our camels, which soon went swinging away with their regular step through the trees. Having marched for about three hours, we entered a district which appeared to be cultivated, and our guide declared to us that he dared not go any farther, and bidding us adieu hastened away, fearing for himself. We proceeded for about a quarter of an hour, when suddenly there appeared coming down upon us a troop of cavaliers, fully armed, bearing lances with large iron heads, and javelins. They threw several of the latter to-

wards us, and we halted and cried, "Peace! peace! we are merely travellers, your guests!"—"Do not move," they answered; "remain where you are, and wait till we have informed the governor." We halted in the sun, not being allowed even to go under the shade of some trees that were at a little distance from us; we sat down under cover of four camels. The horsemen of Wadaï took position opposite to us, and allowed us neither to advance nor to retire. But, meanwhile, they had sent a messenger to their governor, or king, who soon appeared, accompanied by some ten horsemen. His approach was announced by the sharp jingling of the bells which hung on the necks of the horses. The troop drew nigh, and, putting foot to ground, sat under the shade of a tree, and called us to them. We advanced, and when we were near at hand one of the horsemen came a little forward, and said to us: "The king salutes you." It is customary for a Wadaïan king never to address himself directly to his visitors; he communicates with them only through one of his suite. We returned the salutation, and the same horseman said to us: "The king demands who you may be, whence you come, and what is the object of your visit?"—"We come from Darfur," was our reply; "our caravan is composed of merchants, of an envoy from the Prince of Darfur, and of another individual, a simple traveller, the Shereef, son of Omar of Tunis."

Our names were written down upon paper, and the king, mounting his horse, departed with five of his people, leaving the other five with those who at first met us. As he departed he said: "Remain here until you receive my orders." We made our camels kneel down, and sat ourselves under the shade of a tree. Our guards gave us some water, and we waited about two hours, when there came to us, jingling their bells, another troop of horsemen. They were dressed in a long and ample garment, like the black dress of the Fellatah women of Egypt; but they were bareheaded. Every one of them, behind each ear, had a swelling something like the bubo of a plague-patient. These swellings are produced artificially, by the means of cups applied behind the ears, and from which the air is exhausted by suction. When the cups or horns are taken away the tumefied skin is puckered up by the fingers, and two lines of incisions being made, the portion of skin between them is removed, and the cups are again applied. When a good deal of blood has been drawn, cotton is applied, and, the wound being healed, there remains a projection resembling a gland. The people of Wadaï lay great stress upon these swellings, which may be called bumps of courage. Whoever does not possess them is looked upon as a coward, and is repulsed on all hands. In the language of the country they are called Dauma, in allusion to the fruit of the Daum. The Wadaïans despise strangers

who are not thus distinguished, thinking it impossible that any one can be courageous who does not possess these bumps.

As I have said, all these horsemen were bareheaded, except their chief, who wore a skull-cap of black stuff; he had also a Melayeh, or scarf-mantle, over his shoulders. The party alighted at a certain distance and ordered us to approach, and when we drew nigh their chief said:—"The Aguid (or governor), my master, salutes you." We answered by compliments to the chief and to the Sultan; and after some further communications our names were written down, accompanied by a complete description of ourselves and the merchandise we brought with us. This done, we were told to wait during the hot time of the day, when they promised to take us to the Aguid.

We rested in the shade, and ate, and drank, and slept, until the heat of the sun diminished, and the shadows were lengthening, when we were ordered to mount our camels. The Wadaïans surrounded us, and we marched rapidly until dark, when we reached the residence of the governor. This residence had a court nearly as large as the Roumeileh, one of the great squares of Cairo. We were placed in one corner, and soon after we had arranged our baggage were called, to be presented to the Aguid. They took us to the principal hut in the centre of the enclosure, where we were told to sit down opposite a partition

made of reeds. Some one came out and said the Aguid salutes you. We returned the salute, and the governor himself, from behind the partition which separated him from us, said: "Who may you be, and wherefore do you come to Wadaï? whence do you come, and what merchandise do you bring?" We answered appropriately, and were then told that we might consider ourselves as the guests of the Sultan, who was to be immediately apprised of our arrival. A courier was, indeed, immediately despatched to the capital, and we waited patiently under the protection of the governor of the eastern province for seven days, during which food was given us.

On the eighth day the messenger returned, accompanied by a troop of horsemen. They had with them a wooden tambourine, the sound of which may be heard at a great distance, and straight trumpets, at least three cubits in length, which produce a strong sound. As they approached the village the troop announced itself by this curious music. The Aguid, with all his people, went out to receive it. The bells hung at the necks of the horses jingled. I noticed particularly that every steed had a housing of red leather.

When the horsemen had alighted and set themselves in a circle on the ground, we were ordered to approach, and the same series of questions by which we had already been so often tormented was put to us, and written down in the same way, and our

answers written down in the same way, and compared with the former ones. After this we passed the night tranquilly, and next day began to march, accompanied by the Kamkolak Nasser. We advanced three days until we reached Abaly, a place where all strangers arriving in Wadaï are placed, as it were, for three days in quarantine, although there is no reason for doing so, in the fear of pestilence. We resigned ourselves to our fate, and prepared to pass our time as best we might; but shortly after sunset my uncle Zarouk, who had heard of my arrival, came and told me that my father had departed for Tunis, no longer expecting me to be able to escape from Darfur. My uncle had asked permission of the Sultan to withdraw me immediately from Abaly; and I accordingly loaded my camels, and went with him to a house that belonged to my father, and was situated at no great distance. A good night's rest soon made me forget my fatigue. Next morning I remarked the red colour of the walls of the house, and remembered the sand-diviner, Ishak of Darfur, and his marvellous predictions. Zarouk prepared in my honour a repast of welcome, and invited guests, and the Sultan himself sent the materials of a veritable banquet. The messes were carried in twelve oblong wooden tubs, with chain handles, each carried by four slaves. This present was preceded by a young eunuch, according to the custom of the country on such occasions. I was told that this was meant

as a compliment to my father, who had been a vizier of the Sultan. The tubs were full, some of rice cooked in honey; others of fowls fried in butter; others of young pigeons; others of cakes of delicious taste. We gave a share to the slave-porters, and ate ourselves, and fed our servants, and treated the guests and the neighbours, and yet there remained still a vast quantity of viands.

Next evening the Sultan sent seven more tubs, and an equal number the following day. On the third day Nasser and the first interpreter of the Sultan came to see us, and I gave to them my presents for his majesty. These presents were very humble; consisting, among other things, of ten pounds of yemen coffee, in the berry, ten pounds of soap, and two rings of latten, weighing each two pounds. My offerings, though of slight value, were accepted graciously, on account of the respect the prince bore my father; and on the evening of the same day a eunuch came from the Sultan, and presented me with a large parcel and two young female slaves, one still a virgin, but the other, who was not so, much handsomer and better dressed. I returned my thanks, and we recited the Fatha in honour of the Sultan. On the following morning another eunuch came, accompanied by several individuals and by laden camels, bringing fresh presents. These consisted of five jars of honey, ten jars of butter, two loads of wheat, a load of salt fish, a load of tekaki,

or parcels of thread or cotton used as money, a grey horse, saddled and bridled, led by a slave, seven spans high, and two women-slaves, as servants. We expressed our gratitude, and uttered sincere prayers for the Sultan. In the packet I have mentioned were found two garments of the finest tissue, one black and one white, each worth at least the price of two slaves, and a piece of English calico. Besides all these things, I received two bulls, ready for killing, and a young she-camel. From time to time other presents were sent me; among others, a couple hundreds of eggs of the speckled hen. In Wadaï these hens live wild, and lay in the spring, when the peasants collect immense quantities of eggs. It is customary every year for each canton to send to the Sultan at least a hundred camel-loads, which are generally distributed to the courtiers.

I had been four months in Wadaï without having seen, or been seen, by the Sultan. An accident caused my reception. According to the decrees of God, my hand was burnt by an explosion of gunpowder. The Sultan learned my misfortune, and was told I suffered dreadfully; so he sent me a jar of olive-oil, which had been preserved for more than sixty years, and had acquired a red tint and bitter taste. This oil was my salvation, for by it God cured me. I went to the mosque to pray, and was afterwards sent for to the palace by the Sultan, who received me with benevolence. He recommended me

to pursue my studies, and advised me to put myself under the teaching of Sheikh Seid Ahmed, who was at that time giving lessons of civil and religious law at Warah. I did so for some time, and read several learned books; but a misunderstanding with the Sheikh caused me to abandon these studies and his society.

CHAPTER II.

People of Wadaï — Historical Facts — Sultan Seleih — How his Dynasty was founded — Abbaside descent — Boundary Mark in the Desert—Wars between Darfur and Wadaï — A wise Vizier —Youth of Saboun — His Schemes — How to win a Throne — A Sea of Blood — Fratricidal Battles — The Victor and the Vanquished — Ferocious Conduct — The Afrits or Robbers — A Brother still at large—He is taken and killed — Pacification of Wadaï.

The manners and customs of Wadaï have many points of resemblance with those of Darfur, but differ in some respects. The food of the people, the clothing of the women, and the ornaments used, are almost exactly the same in both countries; but there is a great difference in the government and the administration. The character of the people of Wadaï, too, is remarkable for liberality—a virtue not common in Darfur. I shall, however, before entering into detail on this subject, give some account of the origin of the reigning dynasty, for it is impossible to understand the manners of a country without knowing something of its history.

During my sojourn in Wadaï I noticed, that

when I went on Friday to the mosque the Imâm invariably uttered this prayer,—"May God grant a victory everywhere to our Sultan Mohammed Ab-el-Kerim, son of the Sultan Mohammed Saleh, son of the Sultan Mohammed Gaudeh, son of the Sultan Seleih!" This suggested to me that I could ask some old men what was the origin of this Sultan Seleih. The answers given were various. Some said that he belonged to a tribe named Sennawides, after one of the mountains of the country.

But I afterwards observed, on the seal of the reigning Sultan, these words,—"The Sultan Mohammed, son of the Sultan Seleih, the Abbaside." I sought to find out by what genealogical affiliation the name of that noble family could be mixed up with the history of these non-Arab peoples. But those whom I consulted gave me contradictory accounts, some saying that the reigning dynasty had no connexion with the Arabs, others affirming the contrary. A very sagacious person, the Aguid Ahmed, related to me, that when the Tartars had driven the Abbaside family from Bagdad, the kaliphate was removed to Egypt, and remained there until the Turks and the Mamlouks drove them out; that is to say, until the time of the Fatamites. The children of the Abbaside kaliphs, after the overthrow of their dynasty, were dispersed, and sought refuge in various countries. One of them went to Sennaar, and thence passed on to Wadaï, where he settled among the Pagan inhabitants of Mount Seloun.

He fulfilled exactly the duties of his religion, praying, fasting, and performing the zikr and reciting the Koran. The people, whose friendship he had acquired, asked him why he did these things, and he answered, it was to do homage to God. "And what is God?" said they. "God is he who created the heavens and the earth, the night and the day, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, the trees and the rivers; his hand governs all these things." The people of Seloun at length embraced Islamism, and Saleh, whom they called Seleih, after having well-instructed them, caused himself to be named the religious chief, and set about converting by arms, or other means, the neighbouring tribes. The four tribes first converted became, in some sort, the royal family of the country, from which the mothers of the Sultan must necessarily be derived. Such of the remaining peoples of Wadaï as accepted the new faith with readiness were declared to be free; whilst those who only yielded to force were reduced to slavery. In this way, according to this informant, was the dynasty of Seleih founded.

Other persons told me that the Sultans of Wadaï, Darfur, and Kordofal, were all descended from one father, who belonged to the Arab tribe called Fezarah; but as all these recitals are founded on mere oral traditions, God only knows the truth. For my part, I am inclined to believe the account which derives the great Seleih from the Abbasides, on account of the elevation of his character, the

nobility of his mind, his piety, and his goodness. If he had preceded Hatim Tai by a day, Hatim would never have been chosen as the type of generosity in Arab poetry. How different is the paltry conduct and the poltroonery of the Forians from the valour and the easy hospitality of the Wadaïans! The differences of the qualities of the two nations are sufficient to prove the different origin of their Sultans; for a people is, in some sort, the creation of its governors. At any rate, one thing is certain, that the three states of Wadaï, Darfur, and Kordofal, are of recent establishment, not exceeding in age two hundred years.

An old man of Senoun once related to me that Salou Selman, sultan of Darfur, and Seleih, sultan of Wadaï, once met in the uninhabited space which separates the two countries, and there engaged, by oath, to live in peace one with the other. They measured the space between the cultivated land, and drew a line exactly in the centre, which they marked by very long and thick iron nails, driven into the trunks of the largest trees. They engaged reciprocally not to overpass this line with hostile intentions, and called God and man to witness what they promised. When I was travelling from Darfur to Wadaï, indeed, I saw in the midst of the forest, at the place where we met so great a number of rabbits and wild beasts, a line of trees, in each of which a bar of iron was stuck, advancing about a span. Each nail appeared to me about a cubit and a half

long. The points did not stick out straight, but were beaten down, to prevent any accidental injuries to passers-by. The Fakih Ahmed told me at that time that this was the ancient boundary-mark of Wadaï and Darfur.

After the death of the two wise Sultans, their children, as is the custom with princes, began to cast covetous eyes on their neighbour's property. He of Wadaï invaded Darfur, but was defeated with great loss, and under the next reign the Forians penetrated into Wadaï. The war that followed was most terrible, and in one of the battles the Forian Sultan himself was slain. The whole of this struggle reminds me of the war of Basous. The corpses of those who fell were devoured by birds of prey and by lions, or buried in huge pits.

One of the incidents related in connexion with this war is curious. The Sultan of Wadaï, Gaudeh, pretending to fly, had marched round in the rear of the Forian army, and interposed between them and their country. They believed, however, that he was utterly routed, and loudly expressed their joy. One vizier, however, remained silent, and on being asked by his master why he did not share in the general joy, replied that he did not believe in this easy victory, and offered to prove that the enemy's army was even then marching towards them.

"How wilt thou do this?" said the Sultan.

"Bring me a she-camel," replied the vizier, "with a man who knows how to milk."

The camel was brought, and well washed, and the milk was drawn into a clean bowl, and placed, with a man to guard it, on the top of the Sultan's tent. Next morning the vizier caused the bowl to be brought to him, and found the milk quite black. So he went to the Sultan and said,—

"Master, they are coming down upon us, and have marched all night."

"How dost thou know that?"

"Look at this blackened milk."

"In what way has it become black?"

"The dust raised by the feet of the horses has been carried hither by the wind."

Some laughed at this explanation, but others believed, and looked out anxiously towards the west. In a short time, however, the manes of the hostile cavalry were seen shaking above the eastern horizon. Then followed the battle, in which the Forian Sultan was slain.

The grandson of the conqueror on this occasion was Mohammed Abd-el-Kerim, surnamed Saboun, who reigned at the time of my arrival. His father had two other sons, named Ahmed and Asyl, by another wife, who was his favourite, while the mother of Saboun and her child were treated with indifference. However, when Saboun grew up, his intelligence gave him great influence in the government, though his half-brothers enjoyed all the royal favour and care.

Saboun early created for himself numerous par-

tisans, for he felt that he would have to dispute the throne by arms. Instead of wasting his time in sensual pleasures, he employed himself in study, in prayer, and, above all, in collecting arms, coats of mail, horses, and men. On one occasion he met some Magrebyn merchants armed with guns, and learned from them the use of them. From that day forward he bought all the fire-arms that came in his way, and made a large body of slaves study their use under the Magrebyn merchants.

These preparations alarmed the viziers, who went to Seleih, and represented to him that his son was making ready for an open revolt. He accordingly ordered Saboun to be brought before him, and one of the chiefs of the Turguenaks was sent to arrest him. These Turguenaks, who are also called Osban, are the instruments of the anger of the Sultan, and are always employed to effect important arrests. It happened that Saboun was sitting on his Tirgeh, a kind of platform, on a mound of earth, raised within the great enclosure of a palace. He descried the Turguenaks from afar off, and, collecting his people in time, prepared for resistance. It was, therefore, impossible to arrest him, and sufficient time was given for the anger of the Sultan to die away. He took counsel of his Ulemas, and other wise people, and the result was that Saboun's innocence was made manifest, and he was suffered to live in quiet.

Some months after this event the Sultan fell

seriously ill. His chief wife, who had borne no children, fearing that the throne would fall to Ahmed or Asyl, who had not the high qualities of Saboun, and who would certainly have deprived her of her title of queen, or, perhaps, put her to death, sent a secret messenger to the heir, announcing that his father was ill. He immediately collected his partisans in the villages in the neighbourhood of Warah, which word corresponds to the Fasher of the Forians, and waited for the event. When the Sultan died, the queen despatched a messenger to Saboun, telling him, that unless he acted that very night all would be lost, and that he must appear before the gates of the palace two hours after sunset. The sagacious prince collected his force accordingly, and appeared at the appointed time at the Warah. The great difficulty was to force the Iron Gate, which is the fourth of the seven gates. But, by a stratagem, the Fakih Mousa had obtained admission, and was ready to open. The guards were asleep. Saboun, with a few of his friends, advanced with naked feet on tip-toe until he reached the fourth gate; his signal was understood, and Mousa, who had won the confidence of the porter, and had taken the key, immediately went and opened.

"For whom dost thou undo the gate at night?" said the porter.

Mousa did not reply, and Saboun passed silently with his troop. The Fakih then seized a lance

which belonged to the porter, who was half asleep, and said to him,—

"Dost thou know for whom I have opened the door?"

"No."

"For thy master—the master of thy mother and thy father."

So saying, Mousa stabbed the porter, and then, falling upon the guard, struck right and left, and killed fifteen of them. Saboun had collected a considerable force without, and about five hundred men entered after him and joined Mousa in the carnage. The people of the palace, on waking up, met with lance-thrusts hotter than burning coals. Some defended themselves desperately to the death, whilst others submitted. By the blessing of God some huts took fire, so that the Prince Saboun was enabled easily to recognise his enemies and make a horrible massacre of them. The guards of the palace came running forth to escape from the flames, and a great number were put to the sword. Without this conflagration to light up the carnage, Saboun might have been struck by a traitor-hand and have perished.

When the prince, by these means, saw that he was master of the palace, and delivered from all danger, he entered the chamber where were laid out the remains of his father. The corpse was decorated and adorned, and surrounded with the women of the harem. Saboun shed some tears, and said, "May

God set to my account in heaven the misfortune that has befallen me—the death of my father!" Having made this pious observation,* he demanded the insignia of the Sultanship, that is to say, the imperial seal—a heirloom transmitted from sovereign to sovereign—the imperial sabre, the amulet, and the throne or seat of the Sultan. Very shortly all these objects were brought, except the seat, which the women, being hostile to the turn things had taken, would not at first give up. However, by threats and promises, Saboun succeeded in obtaining this precious article.

Meanwhile the combat continued without, and grew hotter and hotter. The Turguenaks, by this time being wide awake, attacked the soldiers of Saboun, who fell upon them with fury. The viziers of the opposite party came up, but were repulsed. The fight lasted the whole night, when the people of Saboun, having the upper hand, were joined by the vacillating, and tranquillity was at length restored.

The Princes Ahmed and Asyl, who had been journeying through the provinces, wantonly oppressing the people, came up next day at the head of an army, but were defeated and put to flight. Saboun thereupon gave thanks to God for his victory, and,

* Those who are acquainted with the history of recent political events, need not go to the centre of Africa for an example of a prince pausing in the midst of massacre to perform those pious duties which public opinion is always ready to set down to the account of the powerful.

appearing in the divan, caused himself to be recognised as chief of the state. He distributed all the important offices to his relations, and the whole of Wadaï submitted to him, partly from affection and partly from fear.* The rout of Ahmed and his partisans stifled the expression of malevolence. The number of the dead was considerable, and blood had flowed in abundance. A poet has well said, "Men of great power cannot escape from danger unless they surround themselves with an ocean of blood."

This event happened towards the middle of the month of Rejeb, I believe, 1219 of the Hegira (A.D. 1804). Saboun remained in peace for nearly two months, after which he marched against his brother Ahmed, who, having escaped from the carnage of Warah, had succeeded in collecting a respectable army. The Sultan feared that, if he did not act with vigour, many tribes might revolt, and thus produce great disasters. He accordingly marched a whole night and a whole day without pausing, and came in presence of his brother's army. The partisans of Ahmed had spread the report that Saleh was not dead, and that Saboun must be considered to be in a state of revolt against him. The wise Sultan, before beginning hostilities,

* I cannot again refrain from pointing out the singular similarity which exists between the histories of all nations in which the idea of authority is developed, and in which a man or a family presumes to look upon a whole people as personal property. The fact of this similarity is, perhaps, the only useful information we can derive from a study of the bloody annals of empires, present or past, expiring or nascent.

sent a messenger to the hostile viziers, challenging them to produce the old king, and offering, if they did so, to fall at his feet. The only answer made consisted of violent words; upon which Saboun performed his ablutions, uttered his prayers, and, in presence of his army, demanded of God to assist him in triumphing over his enemies.

The battle began. In the twinkling of an eye, swifter than the flight of the falcon on its prey, swifter than lightning, Saboun rushed upon his enemies, who were at once thrown into disorder, and took to flight. A proclamation was at once issued, offering a generous reward to whoever should bring him his brother prisoner. In consequence, Ahmed was brought in before the setting of the sun, overwhelmed with shame and despair. By order of Saboun, he and all his relations were laden with irons, and thus attended the victorious prince returned to Warah, where he passed a comfortable night, rejoicing in his success.

Next morning the tambourines were beaten, and the troops were assembled. The crowd gathered together and filled the court in front of the palace. The Sultan appeared; the standards were waving around him; over his head spread the parasol; and the great fans of ostrich feathers gently stirred the air. Every emir took his place; every functionary of the state occupied the position reserved for him. The interpreters unfolded their line, and the Osban stood around, clothed in the insignia of

vengeance and of terror. The Sultan ordered Ahmed, and all those who had taken part with him, to be brought forth. These wretched men advanced in the most pitiable plight, with short, stumbling steps, for they had irons on their hands and their feet. When they were set out in order Saboun addressed his brother, and said to him :—

"Debauched scoundrel that thou art, traitor, libertine, impostor, adulterer, oppressor, contemptible tyrant, brutal despot! dost thou think that a being such as thou art is capable of acting as sovereign chief and councillor, of governing men, and dispensing justice? No! insensate was thy presumption; detestable were thy thoughts. Thou capable of guiding the servants of the sovereign of worlds! thou art not even fit to keep sheep." He then proceeded to accuse his brother of various acts of tyranny, of dishonouring modest women, and of spilling blood, of overpassing the bounds set by God, of trampling on all that was sacred, and concluded by challenging him to disprove these charges.

Ahmed, with a bold, firm, and resolute voice, replied, — "Hold thy peace! May God split thy mouth and confound thee, coward, rebel to thy father, excommunicated from the pity of God! Certainly chance has made a sad mistake in giving sovereign power to thee; but the mistake will be repaired, let us hope. Dost thou think that I fear the savage treatment thou art preparing for me? Do I not know that the utmost of thy power is to say, 'Let him

be killed?" Go; to die is better than to be in the presence of a being so vile as thou art." The Sultan then addressed the Ulemas and the doctors of the law, and said to them: "What is the judgment which the code of Islam pronounces against this rebel?" They answered that he must be put to death, or have a hand and a foot cut off. The text of the words of God is as follows:—"He who revolts against the Creator and his representative, and shall spread disorder and rebellion in a country, shall die a violent death, shall be hanged, or shall have a hand and a foot cut off, or *shall be exiled.*"*

Upon this the Sultan ordered the Mirwed, or iron tongs, to be heated, and applied to the eyes of his brother Ahmed, who, being thus blinded, was thrown into a prison, where he remained to the end of his life.

In the same sitting Saboun pronounced judgment on the captive viziers, ordering them to be put to death by the kabartou, or executioners. These kabartou accordingly surrounded the unhappy men, and felled them with iron clubs. The viziers contended who should meet death in the bravest manner, and vied who should first present his head. They

* It is amusing to see the right divine of kings asserted in the person of the ferocious Saboun, and how priests of all forms of faith are ready to justify bloodshed in the interest of authority. It must be observed, that the learned men to whom this case was submitted made no allusion to the mild alternative expressed in the last words of the law.

feared to dishonour themselves by the slightest act of timidity; for in Wadaï there is nothing so contemptible as cowardice.

Having in this way got rid of the viziers who were related to Ahmed, and having nothing to fear from their party, Saboun reigned with justice and equity, and attracted the admiration of his neighbours. Crowds came to contemplate him in his glory, just as of old Pagan races used to throng the temples to behold some great idol.*

One of Saboun's first cares was to destroy the terrible robbers called Afrits, or devils. He thus ensured the safety of the roads, so that during his reign a solitary woman, even covered with gold, might venture into solitary places and have nothing to fear, except from the Most High. But whilst the Sultan gave tranquillity to others he remained himself disquieted. The thought that his brother Asyl was abroad prevented him from taking rest, and embittered all his pleasures. He waited impatiently until God should give him an opportunity of freeing himself from fear. That nothing on his part, however, might be wanting to effect this desirable result, he invented a stratagem by which he decoyed Asyl from Darfur, where he had taken refuge, and, having got him into his power, addressed him in the same terms which he had used towards Ahmed, and then

* This splendid description of how an African prince wades through slaughter to a throne, and at once becomes an idol, is an unconscious satire of some of the great events of modern history.

ordered him to be put to death. Thus God delivered Wadaï. That was a day of rejoicing such as the country had never seen.*

* I have preserved with some regret the constant reference to a sacred Name in this Chapter, because the frightful picture it contains, and the terrible code of political morals which it represents, would be otherwise incomplete. The Sheikh, who has no suspicion of wrong, goes on to give his theory of absolute government, and, naturally taking the optimist view, uses the old comparison of the shepherd and the flock. I may remark that it is peculiarly characteristic of the bloodiest despotic governments, and their defenders of all degrees of refinement, to make a wanton use of the Divine Name.

CHAPTER III.

The Sultan of Bagirmeh—A Court of Birds of Prey—Saboun determines to make a War—March over the Desert—Encounter with a Rhinoceros—Punishment of Cowardice—Veneration for Sultans—A White Beard—The Crown purifies—Sultan Arous—Anecdote—Attack on the Birny of Bagirmeh—Victory—Act of Cruelty—A Bedawin Traveller—A new Route to the Mediterranean—Schmed-el-Fari—The Sheikh's Father at Fezzan—Caravans—Want of Water—Price in the Desert—An obdurate Sheikh—Death of Saboun.

When Sultan Saboun had fixed himself firmly on the throne he repressed all evil actions, and did all the good he could. I shall notice how he punished the culpable conduct of Haj-Ahmed, sultan of Bagirmeh. This prince had excessively tyrannised over his subjects, so that at length the Ulemas were excited to present themselves before him and utter the complaints of the nation. He received them graciously, and asked what was their business. An old man replied, that they came to beg him to cause his servants to cease from their excesses, and told a parable of a great tree which grew in the midst of a field, and harboured birds of prey that devoured the harvest. "Thy subjects," he said, "are the harvest, thou art the great tree, and thy officers the birds

of prey. We fear lest the tree be cut down ; for the master of the harvest is God, who hateth tyranny." The good old man further quoted some wise saws and some verses from the poets, and also the words of the Prophet, to the effect that an hour of justice is worth seventy years of prayer.

When the sermon was concluded the Sultan burst out laughing, and said, "Do you think that my birds, as you call them, can live without eating or drinking? I tell you what. My subjects are my subjects, my soldiers are my soldiers, and what they do is no business of yours. It is your duty to teach law and religion to those who are in want of these things. If it were not for your sacred character I would put you all to death." Then Ahmed called his emirs, and said to one of them, "Thou art a hawk;" to another, "Thou art a falcon;" to another, "Thou art a kite;" to another, "Thou art a vulture." In this way he applied to each of them the name of a bird of prey in presence of the Ulemas, who were stupified by this decision. They went away lamenting the perversity of the Sultan, and the only result of their step was an increase of oppression and iniquity. The people revolted in several places, but were put down with fire and sword. The Ulemas again presented themselves, and quoted a long list of sentences from the Koran ; but with as little success as before.

The Sultan of Bagirmeh, not content with these excesses, became enamoured of his sister, who was married to one of his viziers. He caused her to be

divorced, and took her to wife, in spite of the opposition of the priests and the disgust of his people. Still greater turpitudes were imputed to him.

About this time Ahmed authorised one of his great viziers to make a wanton incursion on the territories of Wadaï, for the sake of collecting booty. This incursion being reported to Saboun, induced him to write a letter of remonstrance to Ahmed, which remained without any answer, except that a fresh attack was made. Saboun wrote once more, and received at length a despatch containing these words: "We received thy first letter, and afterwards thy second, and we understood their contents. Salutations." This derisive answer induced Saboun to determine to make war upon Bagirmeh. He consulted my father, who gave it as his opinion that war under such circumstances would be justifiable. The preparations were made with the greatest secrecy, and Saboun left Warah, under pretence of making an excursion through his provinces. Some of the great men made opposition to this expedition, thus suddenly planned; but a well-timed severity repressed discontent, and a considerable army was rapidly collected on the confines of Wadaï.

When everything was ready, the Sultan gave orders to commence the march through the wilderness that separates the boundaries of Wadaï and Bagirmeh. It is covered with lofty trees and vast expanses of shrubs. In these savannahs are the repairs of lions and elephants, and of the abou-kern,

or unicorn, called in Egypt khartit, that is to say, rhinoceros.* Saboun had sent people ahead to cut down trees, and open for his troops a practicable road. Six Aguids, each with four thousand slaves, formed the body of pioneers, which preceded the main army by at least an hour. These slaves were armed with hatchets, to cut down the trees and clear the way. Whilst they were breaking through a thickset wood an enormous abou-kern suddenly rushed upon the workmen, killed several whom he first met, and then broke through the mass, slaying people right and left. Every one fled, and the whole body of pioneers fell back upon the army, which, soon being seized with a panic, took flight in all directions. The Sultan soon found himself almost alone, and beheld the abou-kern coming straight towards him. "What!" cried he, "is there no one here that has the courage to fight this ignoble animal?" Now it happened that there was a slave, named Ajmain, tall, well-built, and vigorous, armed with buckler and javelins. He threw aside his javelins, and stepped towards the animal with his shield and a long knife. The Sultan looked on with anxiety. Ajmain waited until the beast was near him, and then suddenly fell and allowed it to pass

* M. Fresnel, French consul at Jeddah, has published a memoir on the abou-kern, which he considers to be the unicorn, and not the rhinoceros.—*Perron.* In this case, however, the Sheikh clearly marks that he means the khartit; and in no part of his work makes allusion to the unicorn.

over him. With a dexterous stroke of his knife, however, he succeeded in ham-stringing the aboukern, which rolled upon the ground. He then fetched his javelin, and before the soldiers could come up he had rendered their assistance unnecessary. Saboun ordered the corpse to be dragged to an open place, and then calling together his men, pronounced an angry speech against those who had been most distinguished by cowardice. He ordered several of them to be seized and executed on the spot. Among these was the governor of the Jeataneh Arabs, in whose place he named the slave Ajmain. After this bloody scene, Saboun said to his viziers and officers: "Whoever of you flies at the time of combat, whatever may be the danger, shall be put to death." All humbly promised obedience. During the whole war, indeed, the effect of these words was manifest; for in the eyes of the Wadaïans obedience to the Sultan is a duty as sacred as obedience to God and the Prophet. Indeed these people often neglect their duties of piety, but never that which they think they owe to the Sultan.

I shall relate an anecdote of the extreme veneration in which the Sultan is held. It happened under the reign of Gaudeh. The wife of one of his officers saw the sovereign pass, surrounded by his courtiers, and in imperial dress. Age had whitened the beard of the prince. In the evening, having returned home, the woman relating to her husband what she had seen, said: "The procession was fine,

the Sultan was fine: what a pity it is that his beard is growing white on both sides of his face! May God prolong the days of our master!"

Suddenly the husband fell upon his wife with violent blows, saying:—"Ah! dost thou say that the beard on both sides of our Sultan's face is beginning to whiten? If any one heard thee, respect for him would be gone. People would say that he is no longer fit to go into battle."

Having well beat her, he bound her, and left her in that spot till the morning, when he presented himself before the Sultan, and having related the adventure, added:—"I have left her there, accursed woman that she is, bound hand and foot! Now, prince, order what I shall do with her."

The Sultan praised the officer for his good intentions, and presented him with a garment; but he recommended him to forgive his wife this one time, on condition that she should behave better for the future.

The veneration of the Wadaïans is encouraged by the Sultan, who loves to be addressed with hyperbolical phrases and with extravagant testimonies of respect. The people are persuaded that whoever is raised to be Sultan of Wadaï immediately is illuminated by God, becomes wise, is clothed with sanctity, even though before his elevation he has given no sign of these things, and has lived in debauchery and vice. The crown and sceptre are supposed to purify. This belief is said to have arisen in the time of the Sultan Arous, who had forbidden his

name to be pronounced by any person, either in his presence or out of it. In order to find out whether any one infringed his order, he sent forth spies on all sides—old women, children, youths—who were ordered to denounce all delinquents. One day an officer of the police, made uneasy by this strange order, went up to the top of a mountain where was a cavern, into which he penetrated, and said in a low voice:—"The Sultan Arous! the Sultan Arous! the Sultan Arous!" He believed it impossible that he should be overheard by any one; but, by a singular fatality, one of the spies had followed him unseen, and overheard his words. Next day, accordingly, the officer was called before Arous, who said to him,—

"Have I not forbidden thee, as well as others, to pronounce my name?"

"It is true."

"And wherefore hast thou done so?"

"Prince, I have not disobeyed."

"Wilt thou swear to me that thou hast not done so?"

"I swear it."

"Liar! thou didst go yesterday upon the mountain, and entered a cavern and pronounced my name three times."

Upon this the officer was forced to admit the truth, and all present united in proclaiming that the Sultan was a seer.

When Saboun had crossed the frontiers of Bagirmeh, he took the necessary steps to prevent the

people from suffering much from the invasion. Whenever he approached a village, he sent for the Ulemas and principal personages, and spoke to them with benevolence, and gave them presents. At all holy places he gave alms. He also prevented his soldiers from acting violently against the peasants. Thus most people prayed that victory should be awarded him. He traversed the country without opposition, and soon arrived near the Birny, or capital. A first battle was gained by the intrepidity of Ajmain and other generals, and the city and the palace were soon taken. The conflict, however, was desperate, and the spectacle of the frightful carnage that took place was sufficient to whiten the hair on the head of an infant. The city was sacked, in spite of the orders of Saboun. An immense booty was obtained; among other things, a large chamber was found filled with leathern sacks full of silver dollars. The soldiers of Wadaï did not know the value of this money, and changed away whole handfuls for a pound of tobacco. The number of slaves taken was so great that the price of them fell almost to nothing.

The Sultan Ahmed fell in this assault, but it was some time before his body was found. Saboun was principally anxious on this account, and calm did not enter his heart until the corpse of an old meagre man was dragged forth and recognised by the women. In the meanwhile, the Fecha* of Bagirmeh was in-

* This title corresponds to the Ab of Wadaï and Darfur.

festing the roads towards Bornou, and Saboun was obliged to send a body of troops against him. He retired to Logou, the capital of Katakau. After this my father asked permission of Saboun to go to Bornou, and, obtaining it, departed with his wife, who was a sister of the Sultan, and his slaves. He was soon attacked by the soldiers of the Fecha, and robbed of all he possessed. But the Sultan of Logou, fearing to be invaded by Saboun, caused everything to be restored to him.

Saboun now prepared to return to Wadaï. At the commencement of his march, it must be noticed, an officer had endeavoured to persuade him not to go to Bagirmeh, predicting defeat. The Sultan had ordered this man to be tied to a tree, with his legs round the trunk, and had set guards over him to give him to eat and drink, until the return of the army. On reaching the spot again, Saboun passed the night there, and in the morning ordered the officer to be untied and brought before him. "Know," said he, "that God has proved thy prophecies to be fallacious, and has given me the victory over mine enemies." Then he ordered the wretched man to be executed, and returned to his country.

Before leaving Bagirmeh, Saboun had placed upon the throne one of the younger sons of the former Sultan. But the Wadaïan army had no sooner departed than Chigama, the eldest son, who had fled, came back with the Fecha and dethroned the young prince, and, throwing him into prison, caused him to

be starved to death. This led to a new war. Ajmain was sent once more to reduce the country. Chigama was made prisoner; but at last was made Sultan by Saboun himself, and reigned successfully.

Some time afterwards Saboun undertook an expedition against Dar-Tamah. His army was at first repulsed; but on a second attack the mountain was taken, and the whole of the population put to the sword. My father, with a little troop consisting of twenty-two Magrebyns, armed with guns, was of great use in this action. The Sultan of Darfur was angry at this aggression; but took no effectual means to protect his vassal of Tamah, who finally agreed to pay tribute to Wadaï. Having finished his wars, Saboun busied himself with the internal affairs of his country, and did all he could to make them prosper. One day there was presented to him a Magrebyn, belonging to the Bedawins dependent on the regency of Tripoli; he was accompanied by several members of the tribe of Bidegat, a non-Arab tribe established to the north of Wadaï, who related that this Bedawin had lost his way in the sands, and had been found by them dying of thirst. They had given him water to drink, and having kept and fed him for a month, had brought him to Warah to present him to the Sultan.

Saboun said to the strange Bedawin, "From whence dost thou come?"

"I belong," he replied, "to the Wallad-Ali, a tribe neighbouring to Barca. We started about

fifty Arab horsemen in the direction of Soudan, hoping to make a profitable excursion. We lost our road, and at length our supply of water was exhausted. Three of us, of which I was one, went out in search of a well. I missed my two companions, and wandered I knew not whither. At length my horse broke down, and I abandoned it and proceeded on foot during three whole days. On the fourth the heat overcame me; I was dying of thirst; and if God had not sent me these men I should have perished."

"How many days didst thou remain without tasting water?" inquired the Sultan.

"Six days without a single drop."

These words astonished the audience, and some believed, whilst others disbelieved.

It was about this time that I came to Wadaï, for the Sultan of Darfur had delivered me from my prison, and I often saw this Bedawin, who was named Ali. He related to me his adventures, without contradicting himself once. Saboun made him many presents, and placed under his orders ten slaves, that they might learn the use of fire-arms. But Ali used often to say,—"If the Sultan, instead of making me teach his slaves how to shoot, would confide to me a caravan, and allow me to return to my tribe by the direct road, a great advantage would result to the king and to the country."

These words were reported to the Sultan, who called Ali before him, and asked if it were true that

he had spoken of a caravan road. He replied that it was, but that he feared to go by it because of the robbers he might meet at the outset of the journey. The Sultan then sent for the chief of Bidegat, and said to him: "Prepare a caravan with the necessary men and provisions, and go with this Bedawin until he says, 'I know the place where we are,' and proves the truth of his words."

The chief Bidegat accordingly departed with Ali and about twenty men on camel-back, and penetrating into the desert, made forced marches for fifteen days. At length Ali cried out, "Good news! there are the palm-trees of Jalou."

"And how dost thou know that this is Jalou?"

"In this way. During our expedition we halted at this place, and passed the night there, tying our horses in one direction, and making a fire in another."

Ali pointed out these two spots, and convinced the Bidegat that what he said was true. They returned, therefore, to the Sultan Saboun, and related the result of their journey. He asked them to what distance they had penetrated, and they said, "To reach the place where we halted would require, with camels and slaves, forty days, but in a forced march it might be done in twenty-five."

The Sultan ordered a caravan to be prepared immediately, and caused it to be proclaimed at Hejeir and at Noumro, that whoever desired to undertake a commercial expedition to the Magreb, as far as Derna

and Bengazi, should prepare to start with the caravan. He put the expedition under the charge of the Bidegat as far as Jalou, and Ali guided it during the rest of the journey. It arrived safely at its destination and returned. Next year Saboun despatched a second caravan, under the command of the Shereef Ahmed-el-Fasi, that is to say, of Fas or Fez, who had succeeded my father in the functions of Vizier. This Ahmed was remarkable for his instruction, his memory, and his literary erudition; he was a profound jurisconsult, and versed in the sacred traditions; he had some knowledge of anatomy, and even gave lectures on that science. I was present at one of his demonstrations on the construction of the eye, and he acquitted himself in a remarkable manner. God had endowed him with wonderful talents, but he was irascible, and disposed to hate. In the end he alienated all people from him, and became so odious that he was assassinated.

From time immemorial the caravans of Wadaï had been accustomed to proceed to Fezzan with slaves, and to bring back various kinds of merchandise. But Saboun was delighted when the Bidegat had opened a new route to the Magreb. The fact was, that he was angry with El-Mountaser, sultan of Fezzan, because when my father went to Tripoli with merchandise on account of Saboun, El-Mountaser wished to put him to death. Had it not been for the great distance that separates Wadaï from Fezzan, and the arid and waterless deserts which it would

have been necessary to traverse, Saboun would have declared war against Mountaser. This is the reason that he was delighted at the discovery of the road of Jalou, by which he could send his caravans direct to Barbary.

I shall relate in a few words the circumstances that indisposed El-Mountaser against my father. When he had resolved to quit Wadaï, and go to Tunis, he spoke of his project to Saboun, and begged him to allow him to depart. Upon this the Sultan asked my father,—

"After Fezzan, what country comes?"

"The regency of Tripoli."

"The price of slaves, then, must be higher there than in Fezzan, and merchandise must be cheaper?"

"Doubtless."

"Shall I send with thee one of my faithful servants, a man who is devoted to me, and who will take with him slaves, whom thou shalt sell at Tripoli on my account? From the price of the sale thou shalt buy for me such and such merchandise."

"Willingly, prince."

Then the Sultan chose one of his faithful servants, and confided to him about three hundred slaves, enjoining him to obey my father in all things. The caravan arrived safely at Fezzan, Mountaser hailed its arrival with joy, for the greatest part of his revenue was derived from taxes upon trade. The merchants who accompanied my father sold their slaves at the capital, Mourzouk; but the agent of

Saboun refused to sell. Mountaser being informed of this circumstance, called my father before him and said,—

"It is thou who hast determined Saboun to send slaves to Tripoli, instead of having them sold here."

"It was not I who counselled Saboun. He learned that slaves were dearer at Tripoli than Mourzouk, and therefore chose that market."

"This is not the custom of Saboun," replied Mountaser; "and the counsel comes from thee."

These words were pronounced with anger, and my father feared that he would be arrested and put to death; but he was let off, after giving a present of six of his finest slaves, and arrived safely at Tripoli. This extortion, however, irritated the Pacha of that regency so much, that he swore to destroy Mountaser, who accordingly was soon violently dispossessed, and replaced by Mohammed El-Moknee.*

To return to Saboun. When the road of Aujilah was discovered, he habitually sent his caravans by that route. In other cases he despatched them by way of Egypt, and thence to Jalou, and thence to Bengazi; for, by the way of Egypt, the road to

* The Sheikh here enters into considerable details on the revolution by which this change of government took place. Those who have read the "Journal" of Mr. Richardson will be aware that his principal servant was a descendant of the Moknee mentioned in the text.

Bengazi is shorter than by the way of Tripoli. Saboun learned that his caravans easily traversed Egypt, and that that country was governed by a just and renowned prince. He accordingly sent letters and presents to the Pacha, asking for his friendship; and Ibrahim, son of the Viceroy, returned presents and a favourable answer, borne by two persons of his suite and a Kawas. The Zaghawy of Darfur learned that the Egyptian caravan was to pass near them, and that it was not in strength sufficient to defend itself. They accordingly attacked and pillaged it, but the Kawas escaped and carried the letter to Saboun, who received him well and sent him back with presents, under escort of a caravan. But the Zaghawy again attacked and destroyed, or made prisoners, the whole. It was this that led to the conquest of Kordofal by the Egyptians.

The Sultan Saboun, who had also sent an expedition to chastise the Zaghawy, now fitted out an immense caravan for the Magreb. The Shereef Ahmed El-Fasi went with it, bearing considerable riches. It was ordered to take the route by way of Aujalou, and was protected in the early part of its course by a strong escort. Then it entered the desert, and wandered from the track. The supply of water was rapidly spent, and it became so rare, that a single draught was sold for seventy dollars (14*l.*). Many camels were killed, and the water within them was also sold at a high price—at least so I am assured by the Marabout Omar of Mesratta, and other of

the travellers. Many slaves and members of the caravan died of thirst.

The Shereef El-Fasi had an abundant supply of water. His companions asked him for some to save them from perishing, but he refused. "I am," said he, "the head of a numerous family; this water is my salvation and theirs. I have young children, and must preserve myself for them. If they die by my fault, I shall have to answer for it at the day of judgment. I will not be the artisan of their misfortune."—"Sell us water," cried they, "at any price you may name. We will give the acknowledgment, and pay exactly on our arrival." The Shereef remained inflexible.

But the sufferings of thirst became more and more intense. The caravan saw that there was another means of salvation. They came in great crowds to the Shereef, and said to him,—"Thou must at once give us water, or we will take it by force. It is not just, even in the eyes of God, that thou shouldst have an abundant supply whilst we are dying of thirst." The Shereef persisted in his refusal, so they burst into his tents, and distributed his water equally, leaving him only his exact share. His numerous slaves, therefore, soon began to suffer from thirst, and the greater part perished. The Shereef himself, however, with his children and three camels, contrived to push on to Jalou, and escape. From this place he, and the rest of the caravan, returned with hired camels to where they

had been obliged to abandon their wealth, their bales of gum, their elephants' teeth, and their ostrich feathers. The whole was transported to Bengazi and sold. But the Shereef Ahmed obtained an opinion from the Ulemas of Tripoli, that the caravan was responsible for all his losses. When he returned, therefore, to Wadaï with this opinion, and was restored to the viziership, he persecuted all his travelling companions, and cast them into prison and spoiled them, so that he obtained many times the value of what he had lost. For this conduct, however, he was punished after the death of Saboun; for the people, irritated by his tyranny, rose against him at Noumro, and killed him, and burnt his body, and cast the ashes to the wind.

It was from the Grand Kadi of Wadaï, who passed through Cairo in the year 1257 (A.D. 1841), that I got information about the death of Saboun, and the events which followed. It appears that the Sultan went out after dark, *incognito*, on a visit to his mother, who lived in a village about a quarter of an hour from Warah. He remained some hours, and returned on horseback. As he advanced, he saw two robbers driving away a cow, and riding upon them, frightened them away. He told two slaves who were with him to seize the animal, and went in pursuit of the thieves, who separated, one flying to the right and the other to the left. Saboun followed closely at the heels of one of them, who, finding he could not escape, turned fiercely round,

and exclaimed,—"What wouldst thou with me? I have abandoned my prey."—"I want to seize thee."—"Take my advice, and go back." Saboun paid no attention to these words, and rushed upon the robber, who cast a javelin at him, and inflicted a mortal wound. The slaves led him back to the palace, where he died in three days.

After him reigned first his son, named Abd-el-Kader, and then another son, named Kharifein, who so provoked the people by his tyranny, that he was murdered. To him succeeded his young son, named Rechib, chosen by the conspirators. But he soon died of the small-pox, and, being buried secretly, was replaced by a boy, who was instructed how to play his part. After another short reign, a younger brother of Saboun, with the assistance of a Darfur army, succeeded in placing himself on the throne of Wadaï, where he now reigns. A quarrel which arose with his allies was the cause that the pilgrim caravan of Wadaï, instead of passing through Darfur as usual, went by way of Aujalou to Egypt. But let us here check our pen, which hurries too far and fast over these historical events. Lengthy details engender weariness; God and the Prophet know what has been and what shall be.

CHAPTER IV.

Beauty of Wadaï—Compliments to its Fertility—Comparison with Darfur—The two Capitals—Contracted Characters of Fadhl and Saboun—Inhabitants of Wadaï—Beautiful Women of the Koukah—The Goran—White and Black Women—Government of Wadaï—Language—Recent Civilisation of Wadaï—Punishment of Adultery—A Bornouese Army—Love of Peace—The Fasher of Warah—The Osban Guard—Gates of the Palace—The Town.

The sovereigns and the peoples of Soudan look upon the establishment of the kingdom of the descendants of Seleih, or, in other words, the kingdom of Wadaï, as a most wonderful and memorable event. Their country, indeed, seems to be a rose amidst other flowers—a large garden in which streams wander, so bountiful has Providence been to it of its blessings. On all sides pure and limpid waters of argentine transparency, and gardens filled with brilliant flowers, are to be seen. On the banks of the rivulets the arrak weaves its branches into thick hedges, where the nightingale trills its song, rejoicing the heart and charming the soul.

Wadaï is broader than Darfur, but not so long. Its territory is much more generous. There is the same difference between them as between to-day and yesterday, between the sun and the moon, between a garden and a desert, between paradise and the great fire. There are, it is true, some few places in Darfur the soil of which something resembles that of Wadaï, but the greater part of the former country is sandy, and almost deprived of water. The Forians, therefore, who inhabit these deserts are puny, thin, and have a yellow tint in their complexion; they are, so to speak, always thirsty, and are compelled to portion out water as if they were in a ship that has lost its reckoning at sea. But in Wadaï, nearly everywhere there are springs of living water; nearly everywhere there are leafy trees filled with the songs of birds. From the province of Saba on the east, to the river which forms the extreme boundary of the kingdom on the west, there is no place where it is necessary to take in a supply of water. At each village, during the twenty-two days which the Traject requires, there are wells, and streams, and trees, and fields. The country is nearly everywhere thickly peopled; and one village gives more profit than ten villages of the neighbouring country. Compared to Wadaï, Darfur may be said to be ruined. The same distance separates them as separates the Pleiades from the earth. Whoever would depreciate Wadaï would act like the legitimate wives of a harem, who look upon a beautiful concubine just

introduced, and exclaim in their jealousy and bitter hatred,—"How ugly she is!"

The people of Wadaï, although less civilised than the Forians, are of a more generous nature and a more hospitable character. All the princes of Soudan admit that the administration of no country is so well organised. The capital, Warah, is wonderfully situated and laid out; it is shut in by mountains, so well disposed that there are only two approaches, one of which could be defended by ten men and the other by two. The soil of its territory is excellent, neither too hard nor too sandy, whilst that around Tendelty reminds one of the plains of Arabia, the foot of the traveller sinking in, whilst dusty whirlwinds constantly arise. At Warah the dwellings are better constructed than at Tendelty. At the latter place both enclosures and houses are made of millet-stalks, except that the Sultan has two little brick warehouses where his most precious garments and weapons are kept, to preserve them from fire. But at Warah most houses, with their enclosures, are of masonry, and the palace of the Sultan is composed of a number of pavilions with solid walls, and bow-windows with trellis-work. A kind of rampart, instead of a hedge of thorns, surrounds it, as the halo surrounds the moon.

In Darfur there are no lands that are worth those of Wadaï, except in the western provinces. But all the districts of the latter country are rich

and fertile, and well-peopled. In Darfur most of the villages are nearly devastated by the violence and tyranny of the governors. The few places that are well inhabited are those whose chiefs have sufficient power to excite fear. Beyond, all is desolation. The sufferings of the people, when I was there, were extreme. Mohammed Fadhl was yet young; he passed his time in pleasure, in riding, in drinking, and with women. His governors overwhelmed the people; every one feared to possess wealth; there were no longer any ranks or classes; the lowest kind of people were promoted to the greatest honours, slaves became viziers, the most respectable and revered men became humiliated.

Meanwhile the affairs of Wadaï prospered under the hand of Sultan Mohammed Abd-el-Kerim Saboun. His justice and beneficence spread over all; under his reign no one had to complain of injustice or misery. He gave the bow to the bowman, the house to the mason, to every one his place and his duty. He maintained the Divine law in honour. His equity penetrated to the most distant part of the kingdom. He was loved by all, except by the wicked, whose hearts were sick and whose souls were tainted and jealous. Wherefore did destiny transform these joys into grief and sorrow? As a dog seizes on its prey, it seized upon this prince in the full vigour of youth. Too soon was the cup of misfortune poured out for

those who loved him. Everywhere had his arms triumphed. Everywhere he drenched his enemies in the bitterness of death and desolation. He subjected Bagirmeh, the dwelling of disorder and crime. He ruined Tamah, the den of vice and irreligion. He shook the joints of the Forians and their Sultan by the terror of his arms, and they feared that the time of their expulsion was come. Saboun died in the year 1226 (A.D. 1811), after reigning only eight years, having done more than other princes could have done in eighty. He lived too little for his country. If his life had been prolonged, he would have seized on Darfur and other provinces of Soudan, and have brought back to those countries the beautiful age of the youth of the universe. The days of his reign were days of smiling festival; his anger was directed against evil, and he had no joy but in goodness. Never did his subjects desire any other master than he.*

Let us now speak of the various inhabitants

* It is just possible that Saboun may have been ruthless only against his political enemies. The glowing character, however, which I have given complete in the text, is evidently the work of a parasite. The Sheikh has as little respect for human life as a Soudan prince. In a lengthy episode, which I am obliged to omit, he refers to Saboun's murder of his brother, and says that a man who gets his enemies into his power, and pardons them, prepares for himself dangers which may cost him his life, "for according to the Prophet, on whom be the benediction of God, no wise man suffers himself to be twice stung by a viper;" and then he goes on to tell an illustrative story of Noman the One-eyed.

of Wadaï. The great tribes of Dar-Seleih are the Massalit, the Mimeh, the Dajo, the Kashmereh, and the Goran, or five primitive tribes; then come the Koukah, the Jenakherah, and the Birguid. Each of these people inhabits a particular country. The Massalit occupy the eastern province, and have relations of interest, family, and origin, with the Massalit of Darfur. They are of middle height and dark bronze colour, and thickly cover a large plain country.

The Wadaïans, properly so called, or primitive inhabitants of Wadaï, occupy more especially the central portion of the kingdom. It is amongst them that are chosen the viziers and the especial troops of the Sultan. The country they inhabit is hilly, and there is found Mount Absenoun. The people of this mountain consider themselves as the original source of the Wadaïans, all of whom, they say, are issued from them. Some leagues north of Senoun is Mount Melangan. The Senawans are of a dark black colour, of elevated stature, and strongly built, reminding one of the redoubtable Amalekites. The Melangans are less dark, and have something of a bronze tint.

The Kashmereh are established at four days' distance from Warah to the south, in the Botagha, a charming, well-watered valley, where they sow a great quantity of vegetables and plants which serve as condiments, such as pepper, coriander, garlic, and onions. The tribe has its dwellings

on the northern side of the valley, and is spread over a surface of four days in length and of only four hours in width. The villages are small, and extend along the crest of the hill like the pearls of the necklace of a houri. Sultan Saboun had given to my father the administration and the revenue of five of these Kashmereh villages, which certainly were more profitable than fifty Forian ones. All their stations are well peopled and full of life. From the smallest of them, if the trumpet of war were sounded, at least five hundred vigorous men would issue. I am persuaded that this tribe alone would furnish an imposing army. They are, moreover, submissive, and more easy to lead than the other Wadaïans. They live in plenty, and their families have numerous children. Their nature is simple and docile, without meanness. They are of middle stature, and of a complexion between white and black. Their language differs from that of the other Wadaïans.

The Koukah are established to the south-east of Wadaï, and form three divisions. They are esteemed by the Wadaïans on account of the slaves which are derived from them to serve as concubines. There is especially one division which supplies magnificent women, even preferable to the most attractive Abyssinians. The young slave-girls which are brought from thence are ravishingly beautiful, and endowed with grace that stirs all the emotions of the heart. Their charms trouble

and torment the soul, turn the heads of the most devout ascetics, and lure them to pleasure. The Koukah tribe is numerous, and their country is well watered. According to the Wadaïans, all the inhabitants of the Dar-Seleih may be bought and sold, except the five original families.

The Goran inhabit the north of Wadaï, spread in little stations, each of which suffices for its wants. They are rich in flocks, in horses, and in camels. The people are of small stature, and of a clear brown colour, something resembling that of the Egyptians, so that they seem not to be of Soudan origin. The women that I have seen from that place appeared to me of remarkable beauty, but the Wadaïans differ in opinion. They almost dislike the colour of the Goran women, whom they consider to be too white, and they are sold at a low price. In Wadaï, the more an individual varies from the black colour the more distant does he seem from the position of a slave, but, at the same time, if there is any tendency to whiteness, they are displeased. The clear mulatto complexion of the Abyssinians is to them the type of the beautiful. A Tripoline saddler once presented to Saboun two slaves, one white and the other Abyssinian. The latter won the tenderness of the Sultan, but the former he never approached, and she remained deserted in the harem until her death.

I did not live long enough in Wadaï to be able to determine perfectly the different natures of its

various people.* There are many other less important tribes spread here and there throughout the country. The Birguids, who correspond to the tribe of the same name in Darfur, are a treacherous, brutal people,—black, small, and slender. They occupy themselves principally in the chace, and in working in iron. I must observe, that nearly all the tribes that inhabit Darfur have corresponding or sister tribes in Wadaï.

All the frontiers of the country are surrounded with Arab tribes,—generally rich in camels, horses, flocks, slaves, silver, and coral. They are well furnished with arms, especially with excellent lances. The narrow space between Darfur and Wadaï is left unoccupied, because the Bedawins fear the extortions of the two great countries by which they would be hemmed in. As I have said, the Bidegat, though they live like Arabs, and feed principally on camels' milk, are of negro origin.

All the peoples and tribes of Wadaï are governed by kings, to whom the title of Sultan is never given. Indeed, the Wadaïans will not admit that there exists in the whole world any other Sultan than theirs. All the other Sultans, according to them,

* Let us here admire the Sheikh's modesty—a quality not common in travellers. An European doctor, after a week or two's residence in a country of which he does not know the language, will send home to a learned society an elaborate account, not only of the present state, but of the history and origins of all its tribes and families. The Sheikh resided more than a year in Wadaï, and nearly eight years in the neighbouring country of Darfur.

are only Meliks. No one must say to a Wadaïan that there is a Sultan in his country, under pain of being taken severely to task; and if any one of the country were to use that expression he would most probably be insulted. Nevertheless, in conversation, the people never say Sultan, but use the word Melik, in speaking of their sovereign. The fact is, their language does not contain the word Sultan. It is a poor, hard, and rough dialect, in which the letter *k* constantly occurs. The commonest syllable is *ak*. God is Kalak, and the same word means a young child. Karak means a pious man, and also a pumpkin. One day I heard a kabartou, or crier and public executioner, blowing his trumpet, and singing his warlike song. I asked what he was saying, and was told that his words meant "hungry bird, come and eat;" that is to say, massacre your enemies, and may the hungry birds feed to satiety upon their flesh. I did not, however, remain long enough in the country to learn the language, and, indeed, did not think it necessary to do so, many of them speaking Arabic. I only knew what was necessary for ordinary life,—the names of water, of bread, of meat, household utensils, clothes, &c.; but as for a long time I have not had occasion to use these words, I forget them. Moreover, all the tribes of Wadaï have a particular language, each totally different from the other—as different as their physical characteristics. The Wadaïans, in fact, have a large head, a long face, strong joints, and elevated stature;

generally, the men are handsomer than the women. The Kashmereh have an oval face, are of middle height, with joints not prominent. The Birguid have small heads, slender bodies, short stature, and are in general very black. The Koukah are mulatto-coloured, slight, and active; the women are handsomer than the men. Each of these people, therefore, has a physiognomy so distinct that it is recognised at once. It is not long since the Wadaïans were almost savages. They have only begun to be civilised for about half a century. Before that period they were confined or shut up within their frontiers, after the manner of the Chinese, allowing no one to go out, not even strangers who came to visit them. They feared that some foreign nation might be excited to attack and conquer their country. If a stranger arrived he was well treated and fed, but could never hope to depart. This custom was persisted in until the time of Sultan Saleh, who was a man of intelligence and good sense, fearing God and loving goodness. Under his reign some merchants came to trade at Wadaï, and were allowed to depart again. From that time forth caravans began to arrive, and the movement continued until Saboun came to the throne. Then the prosperity of the country increased, and the reign of that prince was a series of blessings. He gave presents to the merchants, to incite them to return to his country. The news of his generosity spread far and wide, and traders began to fall upon

Dar-Saleh like showers of fertilising rain. Ulemas and poets came from distant countries to visit the prince. His reign was beautiful as the spring, generous as the beneficent dew. The only reproach that could be made against him was, that by his hospitable treatment strangers were so fascinated that they forgot all their other friends, and even their families. Saboun, from his youth upwards, was a rigid observer of all the principles consecrated by religion. No one could reproach him with neglect of any duties. When he became Sultan he caused the law to be respected, and applied it severely to all criminals, however high placed. In no country have I seen, as in Wadaï, the punishment prescribed by the law inflicted for adultery. I have seen Saboun condemn a woman for this crime. She was buried upright, up to her breast, in the earth, and then stoned to death.* As for the use of wine, I have seen this crime as severely punished in other countries as in Wadaï.

The love of Saboun for science caused a great many learned men to collect around him. The most distinguished was Ahmed-el-Fasi. After him came the Imâm Nour, the great Kadi, who was an Arab belonging to one of the neighbouring tribes. The Fakih Wali of Bagirmeh was a distinguished poet,

* This is the punishment prescribed by the Muslim law. In most countries, however, the same feeling which forces women to use the veil leads to the employment of the sack for women taken in adultery.

and composed several copies of verses in praise of the Sultan. Many other learned and able men were to be found among the courtiers of Saboun.

I have already mentioned the courage which distinguishes the people of Wadaï, who surpass in valour most of the neighbouring tribes. They are far more intrepid than the people of Bornou, which is a country vaster and richer than theirs. I have often been told that the Fullans, or Fellatahs, have conquered the Bornouese nearly every time they have fought with them. When my father went from Bagirmeh to Bornou, the Fellatahs had just gained a great victory over that country, and its Sultan had fled away to the province of Kanoum. Here the able vizier, Emin, received him, and, having collected a large army, succeeded in replacing him on the imperial throne.

On one occasion the Sultan of Bornou, about the time of the wars of Zaky, sent an army, under the command of one of his viziers, to meet the Fullans. There were with them some Magrebyn and Bedawin Arabs. The Bornouese, during their march, entered a vast sandy plain, which stretched farther than the eye could reach, and perceived in the distance a great black mass, covering the whole horizon. They imagined that this mass was the army of the Fellatahs. Fear seized upon them, and chilled their souls. The head of the column halted in consternation, and soon the whole warlike array came to a full stop, and then began to retrograde, the soldiers crying one to the

other that it was impossible to resist so great a multitude. A Magrebyn went to the vizier in command, and said,—

"What! do your troops disband at sight of that black mass, without knowing what it really is?"

"Who," said the Vizier, "will go and reconnoitre?"

"I will."

So the Magrebyn rode out alone across the plain, and soon discovered that the supposed Fellatah army was nothing but an immense herd of ostriches that were flapping their wings on the horizon, and thus figured an army marching, with its banners spread. The scout wheeled round, and returned shouting, "Come back, Bornou; come back! They are only ostriches!" But the army, instead of listening, continued its flight more rapidly, and arrived in complete rout at the Birny of Kanoum, where was then the Sultan. It was found necessary, therefore, to put all the chiefs to death, and to threaten whoever again fled before the enemy should meet with the same punishment. Thus incited, the army marched out under Emin, defeated the Fullans, made a hideous massacre of them, and drove them out of the country.

I explain the conduct of the Bornouese by their long habit of easy and peaceful life. Wherever habits of repose and inertness have prevailed in a state, the citizens learn to fear the fatigues and dangers of war. They have passed their time amidst

physical enjoyment, rich dishes, elegant clothing, valuable horses, beautiful women, and the desire of the constant enjoyment of luxury has become imperative. If unforeseen circumstances call upon men to abandon these delights, they naturally resist and refuse to risk their lives, and abandon their comforts, forgetting that by this conduct the ruin of the most flourishing state is brought about, and that the fear of losing some enjoyment often leads to the loss of all.*

I have already said that the customs of Wadaï and those of Darfur are similar in some respects. The houses in the latter are more elegant, but those in the former are more solid. Warah is a large city, surrounded by a natural rampart of mountains. The dwelling of the Sultan is entirely of masonry, but is surrounded by huts inhabited by slaves. To the west, outside of the wall, is a mosque and a great square, called the Fasher, which word, in Wadaï, is restricted entirely to this place; whilst, in Darfur, it is applied to the whole town in which the Sultan resides. Two lines of acacia-trees adorn the Fasher of Warah. In the first line is a tree especially set apart for the use of the Sultan, who sits under it

* These observations may be transferred from the Bornouese to the classes which check public opinion at present in France, and, to a certain extent, in England. I notice that most people who are opposed to war on principle—setting aside those who are guided by religious motives, the smallest number—are comfortable and fat.

every Friday on coming out of the mosque, for the ceremony of salutation, in order to review his troops and to receive the complaints of his people. A little to the west of the first range of trees is another, under which the Kadis, the Ulemas, and the Shereefs sit. There is another range of trees, a good deal farther off, which serves as the permanent tribunal of the Kamkolak.

The great gate of the palace, which opens on the Fasher, may be used by every one, great or small, rich or poor. Outside are numerous huts, principally built against the wall, and inhabited by the Osban who may be on guard. These Osban are really Turguenaks, although the latter name is more especially applied to the superior officers of the corps, who are four in number, each commanding a thousand men. The Osban form the body-guard of the prince, and are also his executioners and the instruments of his anger. On this account they wear a uniform of imposing and menacing aspect. They wear short tunics, carry heavy clubs, and have iron head-pieces. Every evening a body of one thousand comes to guard the palace, five hundred remaining without, and five hundred acting as a garrison within. They march up in four divisions, making a frightful noise with their tambourines or drums, which are formed of hollowed trunks of trees, with skins stretched over each end. They do not wait to be relieved in the morning, but march away

without being replaced, for there is no guard during the day.

The tribunal where the Sultan dispenses justice is a little square building, built against the wall-enclosure within the first gate. The second gate is guarded by a number of pages, who have passed the age of puberty, and who remain within. With them also are the grooms. The third gate is called the gate of iron, and is, indeed, covered with iron plates.* Beyond this, to the right, is the Kasr, where the Sultan sits in the afternoon during Ramad'han to listen to the reading of the Koran. In the interval which separates the third and fourth walls live the eunuchs and the young pages who have not yet arrived at the age of puberty. These alone, with the Sultan, are allowed to pass the fourth gate, which leads to the harem.

The walls and buildings of which the palace is composed are not much higher than a man, excepting the private apartment of the Sultan, which has a story above the ground-floor, with three windows overlooking the whole city. The windows are merely square holes, with two sticks placed crosswise. The dwelling-places of the eunuchs, the pages, and the Osban, spread throughout the palace, exactly resemble in form the Forian huts, and, like them, are constructed of millet-stalks; but the houses of Warah

* In a former Chapter it is said that the palace has seven gates, the fourth of which is the iron gate.

have nearly all enclosures built of earth mixed with stones. The earth used is greasy, and, when submitted to the action of the rain, becomes covered with a white crust as hard as iron.

Within the third gate of the palace, opposite the apartment of Ramad'han, is a kind of large shed, where every day the Sultan passes some time despatching business. He is separated from those who come to him by a partition of mats, made of a kind of grass woven with wonderful delicacy. This enclosure allows the Sultan not only to hear what is said, but to see those who are present without being visible to them.

The town of Warah, which is divided into two divisions, the Tourtalou, or left division, and Toulalou, or right division, is less populated than Tendelty. The latter place, however, is chiefly filled with merchants and strangers, who come and go. Neither city has a large population. The Forians are fond of pageantry and show. Each king surrounds himself with a number of secondary kings, who form his court, and endeavour to imitate his manners. In this way the principal people, instead of, as in other countries, collecting in the capital, are dispersed throughout the various districts, and Warah may be said to be inhabited chiefly by the court of the Sultan.

The topographical position of Warah differs essentially from that of Tendelty. The latter capital is

established on a vast Gauz, or sandy country, where every one constructs a dwelling of the best aspect he may. Many of the habitations of the viziers approach in appearance that of the Sultan; but at Warah, which is hemmed close in by hills, the palace takes up so much space, that the great people who live there are obliged to occupy very humble dwellings.

CHAPTER V.

States of Soudan—Women of Bagirmeh—The Jenakherah—The Idolatrous Tribes—Their vast Numbers—A Slave-hunt—A great River—Manners—Manufactures—Peculiar way of going to bed—Marking Cattle—Cannibals—Origin of the Fullans—Meaning of "Soudan"—A Tempest—Thunder-bolts—Darfur and Wadaï.

Of the various constituted states of Soudan, the most vast are Bornou and Dar-Mella, after which come Darfur, Wadaï, Timbuctoo, and Bagirmeh. The least in extent are Afnou and Adagez.* Wadaï, although occupying the fourth rank as to extent, has many especial advantages. The slaves are much handsomer than those of Darfur, better trained, and more attentive to domestic duties; but the best slaves of all Central Soudan are, without doubt, those of Bagirmeh, especially the women, whose docility and gentleness are beyond all praise. When Saboun invaded that country the women turned the heads of all the Wadaïans, and almost disgusted them with

* This state ought scarcely to be reckoned amongst those of Soudan. It more properly belongs to the Sahara, although the neighbourhood of Soudan has certainly influenced its manners and its population. It is inhabited by people of Berber origin, mixed with blacks.

their own wives. "Verily," said they, "we have never seen women before." Nevertheless, the Jenakherian girls, which the Wadaïans take away from the idolatrous tribes situated to the south of Dar-Selêih, are also remarkable for their beauty; and in the habitual relations of life have a seductive character which is not noticed in the slaves taken from the south of Darfur. And yet the Jenakherian people, to the south of both countries, touch upon and are confounded with one another; and the slave-hunts from Wadaï and Darfur often meet. The name of Jenakherah, in its general application, designates an immense conglomeration of people, of which God only knows the number, divided into an incredible number of tribes and clans, and spread throughout a zone that extends from the south of Sennaar to the south of Kashna, constituting Pagan Soudan.

In a straight line from east to west, there is from Sennaar to Kordofal a distance of fifteen or sixteen days; from Obeid, capital of the latter country, to Tendelty, there are ten or twelve days; and from the Forian Fasher to Warah, there are twenty days of ordinary marching, or ten days of forced marching. If you proceed still westward, you come to Bagirmeh; but if you take a south-west direction you reach Katakou, a province dependent on Bornou. Between Wadaï and Bagirmeh there is a space of five or six days' journey. From Warah to Bornou there are two roads, one a little north of west, a distance of less than twenty days; but the second, which traverses

Bagirmeh and Katakou, requires thirty-five days. In fine, to go from Bornou to Adagez, you must proceed fifteen days westward in a straight line.* From Adagez to Afnou there are four or five days of desert.

The idolatrous tribes to the south of Soudan are divided into groups and families. They are vastly superior in number to the Muslims, who are thrown like a chain across the desert, and it is at first surprising that they do not overwhelm them. The explanation may be found in the spirit of brotherhood which unites the Muslims, whilst the Pagans are always divided one against another, each station being inimical to its neighbour. When the enemy attacks a village, and takes away the women and children, the people of the next village look on without attempting to give assistance. They are attacked next, and their neighbours regard them with equal indifference, and so on. If these idolaters knew the strength which union gives, none of the Muslim states of Soudan would dare to attack them.

In fact, the numerous tribes of these Majous, or Pagans, cover a space which it takes at least three months of ordinary marching to traverse. The Forian and Wadaïan expeditions have been often out for six

* The Sheikh speaks loosely and from report. The route from Bornou to Adagez (Aghadez) is first slightly north of west, as far as Zindar, and then turns north-north-west. Adagez is the capital of the kingdom of Aheir, the northern limits of which form, in fact, the southern limits of the Central Sahara.

months, but have never succeeded in reaching the southern limits. The Fakih Medeny once related to me that a Forian expedition once pushed far into Dar-Fertyt, and resolved not to return until they had reached the southern boundary of that country. "They advanced," he said, "for five months, going straight before them. Their friends wondered at their lengthy absence, and gave them up for lost. At the end of the five months the expedition reached a great extent of water, on the opposite banks of which it was difficult to distinguish an object no bigger than a man. Some people, however, dressed in red were descried, who took to flight on seeing the Forian troop. There being no means of crossing the water, they were now obliged to return. I asked for information on the distant countries of many persons who had been with the expedition, but could obtain nothing further. A long time afterwards I met an old man who had been on several similar excursions, and he said that he had once penetrated to the plain of water of which I have spoken, and that a man from Arabia, who was with him, said that the savages of the Fertyt somewhat resembled in appearance the Hindoos. But God knows the truth."

The various tribes of Pagan Soudan, although very numerous, have all artificial signs, which distinguish them one from the other. The Bendeh file all their teeth, except the molars, into a round shape. The Kara are distinguished by the piercing of their lips. The Shala have the rim of their ears pierced

with a series of holes, in each of which a quill might be passed. Their women are distinguished by the thousands of little cuts which they make upon their stomachs—figuring rings, squares, &c., and serving as ornaments, for they wear nothing but a very slight cloth round the middle. Others pierce the upper lip, others draw two of their teeth, and others make three rows of incisions upon each cheek.

The regions of Pagan Soudan are remarkable for the fertility of their soil and the purity of the air. The rains are abundant and prolonged, and in some places cease only two months of the year. In those southern countries are produced many kinds of tubercular plants for food, one of which, called oppo, when cooked upon hot coals, has the colour and the taste of a hard egg. Many fruit and other trees cover the plains. The people, so savage, so inhospitable, so far distant from the populations that are advanced in the industrial arts, display, in the fabrication of certain articles, a most wonderful address, giving them a finish worthy of the ablest European artisan. They make for the kings and princes of Soudan stools and seats of elegant shape and perfect finish. They also manufacture, with a cleverness that reminds one of the English, the knife-poniards which are worn tied to the arm above the elbow, and also the iron-work of lances. I have seen among the Fertyt tubes of iron, the work of which was of surprising purity and beauty, reminding one of European industry. These tubes, which are used for pipes, are

not more than a span long, and are bent and twisted like some European pipes; but are more elegant, more graceful, and are so beautifully polished that they resemble silver. The bowls are made of earthenware, adorned with iron circlets. They also make bracelets and armlets of elegant manufacture.

The Fertyt make no kind of tissue, having no need of garments. The men wear a kind of apron about a span in breadth, and the women hide themselves only with leaves of trees, which are renewed as soon as they wither. The tribe of the Jengueh is richest in cattle. Their oxen are small, with long horns, and each individual has his flock. These people, men and women, go entirely naked, without apron or leaves. They are the most intrepid of the Fertyt, the most audacious, and the best runners. They are so swift that none can come up with them or escape them. They sleep both sexes together, buried in ashes. This is the way the women in each family prepare the beds: towards evening, when they have milked their cows and finished their domestic labours, they take a large basket and go through the country collecting dry dung, until they have made a great heap before their hut. They then set fire to it and reduce it to ashes. When they want to go to bed, the wife takes a piece of butter and rubs her husband from top to bottom, after which he creeps into his heap of ashes, where he sleeps. In the morning he goes to the first pool of water and washes himself. What I cannot understand in this habit is,

that being thus buried in ashes, the Jengueh can breathe without drawing in the dust through the nostrils. Is this the result of habit? Do they leave their heads out in the air, or have they any other particular way of protecting themselves against suffocation?*

The Jengueh do not mark their cattle in the same way as other nations. Every one knows their animals by the shape of their horns, for each herd have them in a particular direction, which is given them as soon as they begin to grow. Thus one master has the horns of his flocks perpendicular, another horizontal, another makes them advance forwards, another backwards, or to the right or left, or crosses them or twists them in various ways. These facts are certified to me by many individuals who have visited Jengueh, and I have myself seen some of their cows with horns bent in the shape of crescents.†

The Fertyts constitute an immense population,

* The Sheikh seems distressed lest the Jengueh should stifle themselves; but it is evident that, after having a ointed their bodies, they simply roll in the ashes, and collect, as it were, in this way a peculiar kind of counterpane.

† The French traveller, Le Vaillant, gives, I remember, some still more curious facts of this nature. Among the tribes which he visited, advancing towards Central Africa from the south, he saw bulls which seemed, at first sight, to have four or even eight horns. He afterwards learned that the owners, as soon as the horns began to grow, used to split them carefully into two or four parts, and afterwards carefully bend and twist them into the shapes they desired.

without any religion whatever.* When they are reduced to slavery they adopt the religion of those whose property they become. A year before my departure from Darfur a great Ghazwah, or expedition fitted out to catch slaves, set out under the command of a king or sultan of slave-hunts, authorised by the Forian Sultan according to the established forms. When the expedition was about to cross the boundaries of the Fertyt country some Bedawin Arabs presented themselves to the chief, and said that they had discovered a considerable tribe which had not hitherto been visited, and praised emphatically their beauty. The king, delighted with this information, took a body of men and set out; but some days afterwards he came back much disconcerted, bringing only a few slaves. I was afterwards told that this tribe was a tribe of cannibals who eat people alive. "When we reached their territory," said a man who had accompanied the expedition, "and appeared before the first village, an immense crowd of the savages, with a weapon in the shape of a sickle, very pointed and sharp as a razor, in their hands, rushed fearlessly towards us. Behind them came an equal number of women, each carrying on her head a great bowl filled with a thick paste. The savages rushed upon us, each choosing a victim, and thrusting the point of their weapons in the shoulder,

* Assertions of this kind, so common among travellers, have generally been disproved by more careful research.

made an enormous gash. The blood gushed in abundance, and immediately the women came up with their bowls, from which the men took large handfuls, and, having dipped them in the blood, began to eat. They killed several of our men and devoured them, so that we fled away in a fright."

"And how," said I, "do you call this tribe, whom God confound?"

"They are called," he said, "the Majanah."

The Pagans of Southern Soudan stretch, as I have said, far to the west, even to Dar-Mella, or empire of the Fullans. These Fullans were formerly considered to be the most contemptible of the people of Nigritia. In Soudan, it is related that they descend from a chameleon, and, consequently, never had a human father. The woman from whom they sprang was found sleeping by a chameleon and bore a child, from whom all the Fellatahs descended. For my part, I think that this is a fable, invented with the purpose of contempt. Now-a-days the Fullans are supposed to be the people who are the most advanced in intelligence and knowledge, compared with the other black populations of the centre of Africa. They themselves pretend to be of the blood of the illustrious Ammar, son of Yasir, one of the celebrated and virtuous companions of Mohammed.

If we consider the denomination of Soudan, (which means in Arabic the country of the blacks—

Nigritia,) as an expression indicating only the colour of the people who inhabit that part of Africa, and not as applied to a certain geographical division, we must comprehend under it the whole extent of country from Sennaar and Abyssinia inclusively, that is, from the shores of the Arabian Gulf to the western limits of Timbuctoo and Mella. But those who consider the divers regions of this zone in relation to the advantages and products of each, and the quality of the slaves derived from them, give the name of Soudan only to the cluster of states that stretch westward from Bornou exclusively. Thus, when the merchant-travellers of the Magreb, the Ghadamsees, and the Fezzanis, say that they have been to Soudan, they mean only that they have been to Afnou, Niffy, and Timbuctoo.* Those who have been to Bornou, Wadaï, or Darfur, never use this expression. They say that these three states are too inferior in advantages and commercial resources to be counted amidst the states of Soudan. When I returned to Tunis, I used often to say in the presence of merchants, when I was in Soudan such and such things happened. But they always took me up, saying,—"Thou hast never been in Soudan, but only in Wadaï and Darfur."

I shall here make some observations on the climate of Wadaï. Wind, storms, thunder, and

* In fact, they appear to mean only a single country, the capital of which is Kanou.

lightning, are very frequent there at the time of the Roushach. Their violence is such, especially during the first days of autumn, that it is almost impossible to describe their effects. During the whole time that I remained in the country I scarcely ever saw rain that was not preceded by a great wind that darkened the atmosphere. These storms generally advance from the east, and, passing over Gauz, or sandy plains, raise immense whirlwinds of dust, and carry them to a great distance. At the commencement of the storm the horizon is wrapped in clouds, either black or dun red. Presently the thunder bursts forth with terrific rolls. The people, stricken with fear, run to hide themselves. The shepherds hastily gather together their flocks and urge them towards the villages. Those who are working in the fields hasten to the nearest shelter, or run wildly towards the villages. The traveller seeks the first refuge he can find, for, if he is found abroad, there is peril. The storm, like a haughty and terrible conqueror at the head of his black warriors, strikes and shatters whatever it meets with. Isolated trees are often torn up by the roots, crazy huts are borne away, and old enclosures beaten to the ground. Even the beasts instinctively take to flight. The whirlwinds come laden with sand and gravel, that strike people down as if hurled from a sling.

When I first went to Darfur, on perceiving afar off these immense whirlwinds, I expected great clouds

and showers to follow, but I was soon undeceived. These dusty masses are seldom brought by south or west winds. They are often the effects of violent gusts, without rain or thunder, and for this reason are the more dangerous, for the rain soon beats down the dust and sand, and restores tranquillity to the air. Sometimes, during a whole month, these violent burrascos blow every day, beginning in the afternoon. Generally, in the last days of autumn, they are entirely without rain. When they happen at night, they are commonly accompanied by frightful showers and thunder-claps. The lightning falls, setting fire to villages, and dashing trees to pieces. Mischief is announced by terrible detonations, accompanied by long trains of fire descending from the clouds. Many Wadaïans and Forians have assured me that they have dug pits in the earth, at the place where the thunder has fallen, and have found substances resembling ferruginous scoriæ. In the countries of Soudan where I have travelled the thunder is much louder and more terrible than in Egypt. I do not know what is the physical reason of this difference.

From what I have hitherto said of the customs of the Forians, their manner of life, their food, their constitution, their dwellings, their diseases, their ideas of medicine, the quadrupeds and birds that are found in the country, it will be seen that in comparing them with Wadaï the same conditions of life exist very nearly in both countries. The analogy is explained by their neighbourhood, for

each people borrows something from its neighbours. The tribes on the two frontiers, likewise, are closely united in bonds of relationship. In describing the manners of Wadaï, therefore, I shall only mention those points which are peculiar to them.

CHAPTER VI.

The Fellatahs—Their Religious Theories—Rise of Zaky, or Damfodio—He undertakes a Reform—The first Battle—Zaky becomes King—Conquest of Kashna—Laws—The Wahabites in Arabia — Mohammedan Protestantism — State of Dar-Niffy—Anecdote of Wealth—The Fullans conquer Niffy—Zaky's first Defeat—Muslim Civilisation—Characteristics of Nations.

The Fellatahs accuse all the other people of Soudan of impiety and heterodoxy, and maintain that force of arms should be used to bring them into the right way. They pretend that their neighbours have changed and adulterated the principles of Islam; that they have violated the penal prescriptions of the law, by allowing pecuniary commutations, that is to say, an illicit trade proscribed by the sacred book; that they have sapped the basis of religion, and have corrupted the rules of Islam, by proclaiming illegal and criminal innovations as legitimate; by shameful habits; by adultery and incest; by the use of fermented drinks; by the passion for amusements, songs, and dances; by the neglect of the daily pre-

scribed prayers; by indulgence of all kinds of ill-regulated desires; and by the refusal of tithes for the poor. Each of these crimes and shames deserves vengeance, and calls for a Holy War in all the states of Soudan.

These thoughts had been stirring for many years in the minds of the Fullans, and electrifying their imaginations, when suddenly there rose a man amongst them revered for his piety and his religion. This was the Fakih Zaky, known in Europe as Damfodio, which means the son of Fody. He set himself up as a reformer, and proclaimed a Holy War. A vast crowd responded to his voice. Then he sent to the King of Mella, capital of the kingdom of the Fullans, a letter, in which he blamed him sincerely for violating the precepts of God and his Prophet; and ordered him to conform to the law that was pure and holy, to abolish the taxes and customs on transit, and follow exactly the penal laws enacted by the Koran. "In a word," he said, "thou and thy subjects must submit rigorously to the maxims of Islam and do penitence, or I will rise against thee, as formerly did the just Abou-Bekr against those who refused the tithe of Charity." When the King of Mella received this letter he was shaken by rage and indignation. "What!" he exclaimed, "this wretch threatens me with a revolt, and pretends that we are not Muslims! Let us get rid of him." He collected an army and sent it against Zaky, ordering his vizier to put the whole of the insurgents to the

sword, except Zaky, who was to be taken alive and brought bound. News of the approach of this army was brought Zaky, who said,—"This is what I desire." He collected his partisans, and quietly awaited the approach of the enemy. When they appeared, he told his men to mount on horseback, but himself, from humility, got upon a camel, on the back of which was a sheep's skin. Then he made this speech: "Remember that paradise is found under the shadow of swords. These wretches are come to fight for an impious cause. We have called them into the right way, and to reward us they threaten us with arms. Meet their attack with courage, and be certain of victory; for the Prophet has said, 'Even if a mountain is guilty against another mountain it is swallowed up in the earth.'"

These words of Zaky filled his partisans with enthusiasm, and they aspired to the glory of martyrdom. They advanced against the royal army and routed it, and gathered immense quantities of spoil. Then Zaky pushed on to the capital, where he defeated the king himself, and took him prisoner, and slew him, and placed himself on the throne instead. Then he organised the country and raised troops. He chose a lieutenant, whom he ordered to comply scrupulously with the text of the law; to exact only the legal tithes, and to raise no more taxes than justice commanded. This done, he set out with his army for Kashna. The hope of plunder collected an immense number of people to join him; for whatever

was taken he distributed, without keeping anything for himself. From Mella to Kashna there are about thirty stages, which were traversed without accident. Even when on a journey Zaky fasted every day, and never allowed many hours to pass without purifying himself by ablution. When he was near the city of Kashna, the king, who had heard of the revolution of Mella, came out to meet him. Zaky now sent a manifesto similar to that which he had despatched to his deposed prince. The King of Kashna tore it in pieces, and burst into invectives against the Fullans, and attacked them, but was defeated and killed. The Fakih proclaimed himself master of the country, and his troops plundered the property of the king. He, however, established the severest rules of justice, and made himself beloved by all. He threatened the severest punishment to whoever committed the slightest transgression of the law, or against religion. His criers announced that when the Muezzin called to prayer, whoever failed to be at the mosque should be punished with death. After having spent some time in regulating the country, he announced to his troops that he was determined to punish all the kings and sultans of Soudan for their injustice and impiety, and began his march against Niffy.

Let us here remark a singular coincidence. The war of Reform, undertaken by the Fakih Zaky, began at the same time that the armed Protestantism

of the Wahabites triumphed in the Hejaz.* Whilst the fiery Fellatah was proceeding with his religious conquests, Saoud, son of Abd-el-Azeez, the Wahabite, had come out of Derieh, and marched in arms against Mekka and Medina, under pretence that the people of the sacred territory had abandoned the primitive ways of the law of Islam. It was according to these principles of Puritanism that Saoud destroyed the tombs of the saints and the companions of the Prophet. He instituted an overseer of police, whose duty it was to beat those who abstained from the mosque. He proscribed the use of tumback and tobacco, and forbade the use of certain books, condemned the custom of praying to the Prophet, and allowed of no invocation but to God. If he heard an individual mix the name of the Prophet with his oaths and protestations, whatever they were, he caused him to be seized and beaten, and said to him, —"Acknowledge thy fault and expiate it, polytheist that thou art!" Zaky fell into the same extremes of rigour.

When the Fullans approached Niffy, the inhabitants of that city came out in arms, but were defeated and cut to pieces. This place is one of the most remarkable of all Soudan. It is celebrated for the

* News travels quicker than we are apt to think amongst the Easterns, especially if it concerns their faith. Probably Zaky was excited to begin his crusade by the news that came from Arabia.

easy character of its inhabitants, and the well-being which they enjoy. Strangers are received with benevolence, and some learned men have fixed their dwelling-place there. The cheapness of provisions renders life agreeable. The population is rich, and consists in a great measure of merchants, who, at certain periods, go upon commercial expeditions to Timbuctoo, to Kashna, and to other places of Soudan, from whence they bring back merchandise, and especially slaves. Dar-Niffy is situated south of the states of Morocco, and carries on an active commerce with that empire.*

The city of Niffy, as I have said, is full of very rich merchants, who carry on a prodigious trade. The following anecdote is a proof of this :—A merchant of Morocco, who wanted to exhibit his great wealth, arrived there with at least a thousand slaves and more than five hundred camels; the great people of the place came to visit him, and felicitate him on his fortunate voyage. Not knowing the amount of their fortune, he received them with haughtiness. The chief was hurt by his airs of importance, but dissimulated his anger, and resolved to humble the pride of the stranger. He sent several people to ask what merchandise he had to sell. "I have," he said,

* Niffy is situated on the easternmost bend of the Niger. It appears certain that the American slave-traders penetrate sometimes thus far with their schooners. Mr. Richardson heard, on the confines of Soudan, a very detailed account of white men who came up the great river to Niffy.

"this troop of slaves, but I want to sell all together, camels, cords, sacks, travelling utensils, &c., and I wish to find a single buyer. If there is any one who can pay the price of my whole caravan, let him come." —"Very good," they replied; "rest after thy fatigues, and thou wilt easily find what thou desirest."

Two or three days afterwards, the Morocco man learned that there was at Niffy an individual the amount of whose fortune no one knew. He was the chief of the merchants of the city whom he had received so coldly. This merchant called one of his inferior slaves, who acted as a clerk, and said to him: "Said, go and buy the whole caravan of that man, slaves, utensils, camels—everything." Said dressed himself in his best, and went, and was received by the Morocco man, who thought he had to do with the chief of the merchants of the city. After a few words, Said observed that he had a great number of slaves to send to some of his correspondents, and had heard that there was a large caravan to be sold in a mass. The bargain was soon struck, at the rate of six thousand cowrie shells per head, and the price of all the other articles was also fixed. The merchant only kept a slave-woman, by whom he had had a child. The rest were led away; and Said told the merchant to come in three days, and receive payment. At the appointed time the Morocco man dressed, and went to the house of the chief of the merchants, thinking that it was with him that he had done business. He found him in a handsome

mansion, about which a considerable crowd was moving, whilst he himself sat in a place apart, like a king, overlooking and directing all this bustle. When the salutations had been exchanged, the man of Niffy affected to talk with other persons on matters of business; and it was not for some time that he condescended to address the stranger, and say to him,—"Friend, what is the motive of thy visit?" The other told him that it was to fetch the price of his slaves, which he had sold to him three days ago. The head of the merchants affected surprise, and said that he had not found it necessary to buy slaves for a whole year, and yet had about ten thousand left. "Is it possible, then, that there is any one else here besides thyself who could have made this large purchase?"—"Certainly. I have myself thirty clerks who have slaves, and yet the poorest of them could have bought thy whole lot." At this moment a slave came up, and mentioned that he had bought so many slaves and so much gold dust, that he had received so many thousands of shells, &c. His master asked him if it were he that had bought the caravan of the merchant, but he said, "No." Then the other clerks were called one by one, but all denied having heard of the business; so that the merchant began to think that he had lost his caravan. At last some one said that he had heard that Said had bought a whole caravan. "May Heaven confound him!" exclaimed the chief of the merchants; "he is always

doing those kind of things: let him be called." Said soon presented himself, and admitted the purchase, but affected to be angry with the Morocco man for speaking on such a trifling business to his master, and then requested him to come and be paid. Having handed over the amount of shells agreed on, he said,—"May God and his Prophet preserve me from ever buying again from such as thee! Didst thou consider me to be insolvent, that thou shouldst thus go and complain to my master? I have bought much greater caravans than thine without his knowing anything of it." The Morocco man was so humiliated by this proof of his comparatively small importance, that he hastened to leave the city.

Let us now return to the history of the Fullans. Zaky easily made himself master of Niffy. Struck with the beauty of the country, and the wealth of the inhabitants, he resolved to build there a seat of government.* He became so fond of the country that he always returned thither after his excursions. Having rested a year, and organised the government according to the principles of Islam, he marched upon Afnou, which is celebrated for the beauty of its slaves, and soon conquered it as well as Aghadez. Then he proceeded against Bornou, the Sultan of which fled, as I have related, to Kanoum. Now it was that Emin preached a sacred league against the invader, whom he accused of having uttered false

* "This," says Mr. Perron, "refers probably to the foundation of Sakkatou, which name, however, was not given till 1805."

accusations against Soudan, as an excuse for extending his authority. Soon afterwards Zaky was defeated with great loss, and driven out of Bornou. This was the first revival of courage amongst the princes of Soudan. It is singular that the defeat of the Fellatahs coincided in time with the first reverses of the Wahabites, which took place four or five years after the period when the French definitively evacuated Egypt.

All these revolutions, which convulsed Central Soudan from Niffy and Kashna to Bornou, were the consequences, as I have already suggested, of the sedentary and tranquil life of the inhabitants. Ibn-Khaldoun has already shown, in his great history, the effects of luxury in rendering people effeminate. It may be objected that the developments of industry and wealth in Europe do not produce similar results. But it must be remembered that, in Islam, whatever refinement exists is merely material, and has reference to the pleasures of the table, the relation of the sexes, the laying out of fine houses, furniture, valuable horses, singing, and domestic festivals. But there is nothing done for the abstract sciences, nothing for the departments of knowledge which are the domain of intelligence, the applications of mathematics to arts and to war, physics, chemistry, medicine, natural history, botany, and experimental studies. The knowledge of the Muslim, when he has any at all, is confined to religious and civil jurisprudence, according to the rite he has adopted. He adds to

this certain theological notions on the unity of God, and the elements of analytical grammar. This is all that constitutes the science of the Ulemas, the learned men of Islam, who attack all those who meddle with human sciences as infidels and philosophers.

I shall now make some observations on the various characters of the people of Soudan, comparing them with the other countries known to me. The Forians resemble the Turks something in character, as well as by a large number of words of their language, by the ostentation of courage under which they mask their pusillanimity, by their pride, coupled with their suppleness to humiliation, by their love of idleness, by their haughtiness, by their fondness for show, and their eagerness to exercise revenge when an opportunity presents itself. Like the Turks, the Forians neglect important things to busy themselves about matters of minor importance. But that which characterises them essentially, especially those that are indigenous, inhabiting the Marrah mountains, is an avarice beyond all expression. Generosity and free and open hospitality are found only among the kings, who are nearly all of Arab origin. The Forians are wanting in vivacity of intelligence and in promptitude of action. This is another feature in which these black men, habitants of arid and unfertile countries, resemble the Turks, who occupy a more favourable position.

The temper of the Wadaïans has some analogy

with that of the French. They resemble them even in their fondness for institutions like that of the quarantine; but, instead of having their narrow and grasping parsimony, they have the generous hospitality of the Arabs. I also notice in the councils of the Sultan a certain resemblance with the parliamentary assemblies of France. The Kamkolaks, who are in reality Wadaïans of an inferior rank, are counsellors of the Sultan. If he were to dissent from their decisions, and oppose the execution of their judgments, they would probably revolt against him. This is another trait peculiarly French.

The people of Bagirmeh and Katakou remind me of the Italians in the softness of their language, and the want of energy of their character. The Birguid, the Tamians, and the Zagawah, are perfidious and treacherous, like Greeks. Like them, they are base and crawling when they fall in war into the hands of their enemies. The Fullans resemble the Russians in their love of aggression and conquest, and in the care they take to keep armies always ready for that purpose; but in religious fanaticism they resemble the Spaniards, and for a single prayer missed would put a man to death. The Bornouese resemble the English in their somewhat coarse pride, in their taste for luxury and show, and in their insatiable avidity; but they are cowardly. Among Dajo and the Bijo, we find the natures of the Fellahs, or peasants, of Egypt—the same laziness, the same carelessness of their persons, the same dirt around

them. They submit, without a word, to all kinds of oppressions from their superiors—to forced labour in every shape. They allow their children, girls and boys, to be carried away and made to work, without ever thinking of means of escape from unjust caprice, or of freedom from odious servitude. This resignation is greater still among the Berti and the Massalit, who are richer and more numerous. They turn pale at the slightest glitter of warlike weapons, and at sight of a few armed men tremble like sheep in presence of the wolf. A single Forian, with a stick in his hand, can drive before him two hundred men of Berti.

CHAPTER VII.

Trade, by whom followed—Exports of Darfur—Price of Slaves—Imports—Value of Metals—The Tallari—Commerce of Wadaï—Pledges of Love—A lost Moudraah—Value of Salt—Manufactures—Interchange of Services—Burials—A Happy Country—Counting Prayers—Forian Character—Occupations of Women—Government of Wadaï—Offices—Audiences—Kabartou—Servility—Punishments—Prisons.

The Sovereign Disposer of all things has placed commercial men neither among the great nor among the poor, but among the middle classes. By their means the productions of various countries are spread abroad, and relations are established between nations. The most virtuous of men, the holy Prophet of God, Mohammed himself, honoured this profession, and went on trading journeys into Syria. His example has been followed by men of various climates; among others, the people of Soudan, being in possession of many natural productions, and in want of manufactured articles, have naturally taken to trade.

From Darfur are exported slaves, gum, elephants' teeth, tamarinds, various kinds of medicaments, ox-hides, from which are made the great

square leathern bags, called in Egypt rai,* and black and white ostrich feathers. All these things are easily sold in foreign countries, where there is a great demand for the principal articles.

Darfur imports merchandise which is generally without value or utility for civilised people, especially karaz, or glass ware, beads, &c., of various kinds, used as ornaments by the women. Some kinds serve the purpose of hidden jewellery, if I may so express myself. They wear several strings of them round their waist, the jingling of which is supposed to stimulate amorous sentiments. Women know how to communicate their feelings and desires to their lovers by this curious language. The Forian women also wear, for the same purpose, bracelets and anklets, with little bells, which tinkle as they move. Coral, artificial and otherwise, is also sent to that country for the manufacture of ornaments. The red caps worn by the men are brought from Fez. The slave-merchants take to Darfur some fine cotton stuffs, each piece of which is of sixty cubits. They cut them into lengths of twenty cubits in the country where they buy, and having had them dyed, take them away, and generally procure a slave for each cut. A coarse mixture of silk and cotton is also used in the barter for slaves, as are also several other kinds of stuffs. Foreign asses, such as those of Egypt, are

* These bags are used to carry water. Two of them form a camel-load. The water-dealers fill from them the sheep-skin bags which they carry on their backs.

highly esteemed in Darfur. *A Forian will give ten slaves for one ass!* *

They take to Darfur a good deal of sunbul or nard (*Spina Celtica*), sandal wood, myrtle-leaves, cloves, coffee, and soap. With the exception of the two last-mentioned articles, which are imported in very small quantities, all these substances are reduced to powder for cosmetics. Old vessels of copper, such as worn-out caldrons, are sent to Darfur, and sold at a high price, to be mixed with zinc, for making anklets and other ornaments. Yellow copper, in leaves, is very rare, being used only to make the frontlets for horses. Latten wire is much sought after, to ornament the shafts of lances. Needles are very dear; a slave is given for a thousand. Foreign razors bear also a high price; those made in the country skinning rather than shaving. Turkish saddles, Mamlook stirrups, coats of mail, and straight swords—for the Sultan only can use the scimitar—are in request. To these straight swords are attached silver pommels, in which are hollows containing pebbles, that produce a jingling sound. When thus ornamented, a sword is called a garlic-head.

One of the most profitable articles of importation is the tallari, or Spanish douro—the pillar-dollar. A slave is bought for eight or ten dollars (from 2*l.* to

* It would be difficult to invent any more effective way of exciting a feeling of horror against this wretched institution of slavery, which still lags in the rear of the army of abuses that has been put to flight, than this cold-blooded statement.

2*l.* 10*s.*). Bars of sulphur are also very valuable in Soudan; so is writing-paper; and the sale of Muslim books of jurisprudence, and of the Haddyth, or book of traditions of the Prophet, is very advantageous. Brass inkstands, with cases for pens attached, and pen-knives, are sold to the Fakihs. Muslin for turbans, shoes, and yellow slippers for women, are only sent to private orders. Most of these articles are supplied by Egypt to Darfur.

Wadaï imports almost the same articles as Darfur, although the people are less refined in their taste, and the law interferes in some respects. For example, the khaddour, which is the ornament of the common women in Darfur, is restricted in Wadaï to the wives of great personages, and no one is allowed to use Turkish saddles except the Sultan. The articles most sought after are various kinds of beads, natural and artificial coral, copper, calicoes, melayeh, various kinds of perfumes, coats of mail, sabres, and yellow copper in leaves. The Wadaïans use more silk in their ornaments than the Forians. Asses are rarely demanded. Most of the merchandise brought to Wadaï comes by the way of Fezzan.

In Darfur is bought a kind of bead about three fingers' breadth long, and generally black and white, called chor. The women string these beads on threads taken from the leaves of the daum, or on grass stalks. The rich interpose between a black bead and a white bead a round bead of coral. In this way moudraahs, or armlets, worn above the

elbow, are made. Many young Forians wear these ornaments as a sign that they love a young girl, or are beloved by her. Pledges of affection are often interchanged in this way. To a young girl is given generally a ring, or a cadmoul, or sash of cotton striped with silk. In return, the lover receives a moudraah, and exhibits it on his arm, proud of his good fortune.

When I arrived in Darfur my father had two concubines, to one of whom he was passionately attached, being guided in his likes and dislikes by her. One day she was engaged with some of our slaves in arranging her collars, and I was sitting on the ground close by. A young Arab girl of the neighbourhood came and brought a present of a bowl of milk, which was put aside for my father, but I went and drank it, upon which my step-mother became angry. It happened that one of her moudraahs fell to the ground, and, being buried in the dust, could not be found. She accordingly accused me, as soon as my father came in, of having fallen in love with the Arab girl, and of having stolen the armlet to make her a present. I was innocent, but my father believed the accusation, and next day ordered my uncle Zarouk to put me in irons and imprison me in a room. I was kept in this way for three days, regretting that I had come to Soudan. The anklet, however, was at length found, and I was let loose, and presented, by way of consolation, with a complete new suit. I went to kiss the hand of my

father, who said to me, with emotion, "Give thanks to God that it was I, and not a judge, who had to examine this affair, otherwise thou wouldst have been condemned." A little while afterwards this woman again accused me of theft, upon which my father ordered her to be chained and sent to the kitchen to work. It was with some difficulty that he was induced to forgive her. Long afterwards he left her in Wadaï with Zarouk. She was insubordinate, and was put in prison by the Sultan, and remained there several years, being only let loose to bear a child.

The most lucrative article of commerce in Darfur and Wadaï is red copper, which brings almost its weight in gold. Next comes zinc, and then tallaris and latten, in leaf. All these things are brought by the Jellabs, or slave-merchants, on their return journeys.

The Arabs of the neighbouring desert import other articles, as melted butter, oxen, cows' hides, and honey. The Rezeigat, especially, bring large quantities of butter. Other tribes trade in salt, which they fetch from the wells of Zaghawy. This substance is much sought after in Darfur, where it is often sold one measure for twenty measures of millet. The salt of Mydaub is especially set apart for the viziers and other great people. That of Zaghawy is the worst that can be found in the world, being mixed with great quantities of earth. People in easy circumstances dissolve it in water, which they strain off, and afterwards allow to evaporate. Verily! if the Forians were to behold salt like that of Ro-

setta or Tunis, they would fight for it sword in hand. The Falgo salt, found in the Marrah mountains, is used in pieces as money.*

As might be expected, industry is little developed in Central Africa. In Darfur and Wadaï there are no trades scarcely but those of the weaver, the blacksmith, the cultivator, the spinner, and the founder, that is to say, the maker of lances, of bows and arrows, and some rough utensils for agriculture and the ordinary uses of life. In Darfur there are strangers from Katakou, who dye in blue, with indigo, and know how to produce the varying blue-black tints of the Godeny and the Teykan. The Forians are very clever in tanning skins, for which they have all the necessary implements and substances. They prepare, with the hides of oxen and camels, sacks, and large fine pieces of leather, which are used to sit or sleep upon, or to bolt wheat. With the skins of goats they make excellent bags for carrying travelling provisions. With sheep-skins, red or green, they cover scabbards or saddles.

There are scarcely any other arts in Darfur than those which I have indicated. The wants which in civilised countries have created the professions are satisfied by mutual assistance. Neighbours shave the heads of one another, and then there is no need of barbers. If a man requires a house, he calls in his friends, and pays them with a dinner and supper, and so there is no need of builders.

* See "Voyage to Darfur."

If a man dies, a friend, and, above all, a Fakih, performs the last duties, washing the corpse and burying it, for every one knows the simple ceremonies necessary. If a woman dies, the funereal duties are performed by some old person of her own sex. To carry the corpse to the burial-place, they knock up on the spot a rough litter, made of two sticks with cross strings. Upon this is placed a kind of bed, made of mats. The corpse is placed thereon, and thus taken to the place where the friends of the deceased have dug a grave, which is in all cases separate from any other. Neither those who wash the corpse, nor those who carry it, receive any kind of payment; and no charge whatever is made by those who recite the Koran for the repose of the soul of the deceased, or who repeat the prayers of deliverance, or who tell the chaplet of pardon. There is, therefore, no need of undertakers or priests in that country.

In Darfur I have seen the prayers of the chaplet counted by means of little fragments of reeds. Whoever wants to take part in these kind of prayers cuts ten small fragments of reed and ten large ones. When he has pronounced on his ordinary chaplet the first hundred of La Illah il'Allah—"There is no other God but God," he puts aside one of the small pieces of reed; after the second hundred, he puts aside another piece; and so on until all the ten are united. Then he knows that he has articulated a thousand times his confession of faith. In order to

count the thousands, he puts aside one of the large pieces of reed, so that at last he knows exactly when he has uttered the sacred words ten thousand times. The Forians pretend that the fragments of reed thus used acquire beneficent virtues. If they are burned near a fever patient, they at once cure him. The ashes mixed with water form an effective collyrium, which cures ophthalmia, if applied three days successively in the morning. Some of the fragments placed between a corpse and its shroud induce God to treat the soul of the deceased with benevolence, and not to be severe in the appreciation of its faults. Fraternal charity, in reference to the will of God, is a common thing in Darfur. He upon whom any misfortune falls is always succoured by his friends and those who know him.*

The Forian women have no knowledge of the domestic labours to which the women of civilised countries are accustomed to. The daughters of the rich spend a part of the day in adorning themselves; in rubbing their bodies with butter and their hair with grease, in putting kohl in their eyes, in perfuming themselves, and curling their hair. When they have finished they occupy themselves with household duties, and then pass their time in making fine mats with slips of daum leaves, which they have stained of different colours — red, black, green, or

* The Sheikh here relents from his uncompromising condemnation of the Forian character, which probably had its origin in the rough treatment he himself received on some occasions.

yellow. These mats are light and handsome, and seem to invite those who see them to sit down and sleep.

A Forian woman, of whatever class, generally prepares the food of her husband and the guests who come to the house. The poor assist the men in sowing and reaping, in gathering grain and cotton. At other periods of the year they collect a store of fruit and many kinds of wild grains for their families. It is they also who gather in the water-melons, and pound them, and prepare them for eating. They go out into the fields with their husbands and cut down the weeds, which they collect for fuel. The very young girls keep the flocks, and afterwards accompany their parents in their work. In the evening it is the wife who brings home upon her head a great packet of wood and dry grass or weeds, to serve for the purposes of cookery and to light up the huts.

The poor people generally endeavour to buy each a she-goat or a sheep, on the milk of which they live. They are in a most frightful state of want and misery, suffering from the tyranny of their governors and the exigencies of war. Their life is that of slaves.

Let us turn from the consideration of these humble topics to that of the government and the constitution of the country of Wadaï. *Certes*, the most powerful and the most respected sovereign in all Soudan was Sultan Saboun. It is the custom in Wadaï to recognise as a prince only one who is born of a mother of noble origin, whose genealogy

is pure, and who belongs to one of the five privileged tribes. The son of a slave, even if she were a descendant of the Prophet, can never ascend the throne. I have already traced back Sultan Saboun to the great Seleih, and it is not necessary to repeat what I then said.

The functions and dignities of Darfur differ in nature from those of Wadaï. In the latter country there are eight Kamkolaks; four of the first rank and four of the second. They form a judicial tribunal, whose decisions can never be reversed by the Sultan. If he has strong reasons for blaming any particular sentence, and they persist in it, he may discharge them, but he cannot reverse what they have decreed without the assistance of the Grand Kadi.

The highest rank after the Kamkolaks is that of Momo, mother of the Sultan; then comes that of Hobaba, or chief wife; and afterwards are ranged the Aguid, the Viziers, the Kamna, and the Turguenak. Then follow the kings of the mountains, the governors of secondary rank, and the kings.

Twice a-week, on Mondays and Fridays, the Wadaïan Sultan gives a public audience to receive the complaints of his people. On the Monday he occupies a room which overlooks the Fasher, where are the lines of trees I have mentioned, under which is established the tribunal of the Kamkolaks, indicated by a line of lances stuck up in the ground. The judges remain there all the morning and afternoon, and only go away during the great heat, or

when it rains. As I have mentioned, it is also under a tree that the Sultan gives audience on Friday. Then the Kadi, the Muftis, the Ulemas, the Shereefs, and other great people, each according to his rank, squat down on the ground before the Sultan, between whom and the crowd is a row of seven interpreters, ranged one behind the other. Amongst the Forians the people begin by uttering their salutations; but in Wadaï no one speaks before the Sultan. The interpreters repeat his words, saying: "Kadi, the Sultan salutes thee; Ulemas of Islam, the Sultan salutes you;" and so on through all the various ranks until they come to the people. The individuals of each category, as soon as they have been addressed, clap their hands and incline their heads even to the earth, at first on the right hand and then to the left. During this ceremony, and almost without interruption, the baradieh and tambourine resounds behind the Sultan, and whenever its notes are strengthened the whole assembly accompanies it by a gentle clapping of hands. At the same time the soldiers, who are ranged standing round the crowd, brandish and strike together the iron rods which they hold in each hand. This beating of the tambourine, this clapping of hands, this clashing of weapons, is mingled, moreover, with the cries of the soldiers, who shout out, "Glory to thee, O Sultan! Buffalo of intrepidity! May God make thee victorious over our enemies,—thee, our master!" All these sounds make a strange and savage concert.

The Kabartou form a choir who in public ceremonies sound the trumpet and beat the tambourine; they also act as executioners. In the weekly assemblies they sit on a slightly-raised platform, some of them furnished with long trumpets, which assist in increasing the clamour. When the music ceases to play, the Turguenak advance, armed with clubs, the knobs of which are covered with iron. They wear steel headpieces, and most of them have coats of mail, whilst others have a thick-padded tunic, to protect them in battle against arrows. Each company is headed by two drums, which are beaten with tremendous violence. They march through the crowd, and then round between it and the Sultan, making as if they would strike the spectators, and crying: "Ask pardon of God and the Prophet."

At the extremity of the Fasher, opposite the palace, is a little eminence called Thoraya, on the top of which is a building in which are deposited the great kettle-drums of the Sultan. At Wadaï the covering of these drums, instead of being performed with ceremonies, as at Darfur, is executed in secret. Whenever the Sultan appears upon the Fasher the music of Thoraya resounds, and at the same time is heard the crash of the baradieh, the rolling of the tambourines of the Kabartou, the trumpets of the Turguenak, the clashing of the iron rods, the clapping of hands. It is impossible to conceive a greater clamour. On Friday, after the salutation, whoever has any complaint to make proceeds in the following

manner:—He first strips his garments off his shoulders and ties it round his loins; then he walks in front of the spectators from right to left, stooping down and clapping his hands. He does this until he succeeds in attracting notice. If the matter is of minor importance the Sultan sends the plaintiff to the Kamkolak; if otherwise, he himself decides.

The respect of the Wadaïans for their Sultan is a kind of adoration. They never lay any business before him without repeating the first chapter of the Koran, and praying God to grant him victory and long life. Everything of value is reserved for him. No vizier or functionary is allowed to wear silk on his person, or in the housings of his horses. He must not have a saddle covered with cloth, nor gilded, nor embroidered in gold, nor garnished with silver. No one but he, moreover, is allowed to make use of a carpet to sit upon. No man or woman is permitted to have ornaments of gold, nor to have fans of ostrich feathers, nor even of coloured paper, as in Europe. Both sexes indifferently wear clothes, black or white, of cotton, linen, or coarse muslin. All ornaments, even of the wives of viziers and emirs, are of silver; the middle classes wear copper, and the poor iron. If any one were to transgress this sumptuary law, whatever might be his rank, he would be put to death without mercy.

The object of these customs is to repress the spirit of insubordination,—to prevent its being supposed that there is no difference between a

sovereign and his subject, and thus to prevent revolt. The servility of the people is so great that it is not allowed amongst them to praise any one whatever. No one is worthy of praise but their Sultan. It is not even allowed for a subject to bear the same name. Under the reign of Saleh the people of the provinces came to present themselves to that Sultan. The interpreter, according to custom, had taken down their names beforehand in a hurry. Among the visitors was one named Saleh, so, in addressing him, the interpreter said,— "The Sultan salutes Fakih Saleh." At these words the Prince frowned, and uttered a cry like that of a peacock. The interpreter felt his danger, and quickly said, — "The Sultan salutes thee, Fakih Fakeh." Near Warah there was a well called the well of Saboun; when that Sultan came to the throne it was called the well of Ochar.

The Sultan never drinks water twice following from the same place. The water-carriers of the palace come suddenly upon one of the wells, and beat away with whips those who are near it, and then fill their jars. It is feared that some one may bewitch or poison the water, which is put carefully in jars, enough for twenty days being taken at a time.

No person is allowed to appear before the Sultan inside his palace with a turban, with shoes, or even fully dressed. He takes off something at each gate, until he is reduced to a single garment round the

middle. When the Sultan calls any one he uses the words, Ya Abd !—"Oh slave!" which appellation is received with pleasure. No one is allowed to see him face to face in his own dwelling, for he always speaks from behind a partition or curtain.

When a debtor delays payment too long in Wadaï, the creditor, on meeting him, whether alone or in company with others, draws a line round him and says, "I summon thee in the name of God and his Prophet, in the name of the Sultan, and the mother of the Sultan, and the judges, not to overpass this line until thou hast paid me." After this the debtor dare not pass until he receives permission or pays his debt, otherwise he may be severely punished.

It is customary in all Wadaï to give to any pretty girl the surname of Habbabeh, the title of the first wife of the Sultan. After this she cannot be married until she has been presented to the Sultan, who has the option of keeping her for his harem or of sending her back to her father.

Few persons occupy a lofty position for more than two years. After that they are removed to other posts or fall into disgrace. There is an extensive system of inspection organised. Malversation is severely punished.

There are various kinds of punishment established by the Koran and by the laws of different countries. Murderers are decapitated in Egypt, or cut to pieces with swords, or hanged, or impaled.

In the times of the Mamlooks, a frightful punish- was that of the Shamyal. The body of the criminal was placed in a great basin and stained with tar, which was set on fire, and in this state he was carried about the city on the back of a camel. The last person who suffered this punishment was a woman named Jinieh, who used to decoy young women into her house to assassinate them. Other criminals were burned, others were buried alive. In the year 1797 of the Christian era there was a Turk who used to put men in a deep pit, and sit over it to take his meals until they died. In Tunis it is still customary to pound people in mortars. A Sultan of Morocco once put a Jew in a barrel, the inside of which bristled with nails, and ordered it to be rolled down a hill. There are various other kinds of punishments, by drowning, strangling, poisoning, starvation, or the cannon. The Defterdar Bey, in Egypt, used to call the cannon employed for this purpose his Kadi, and when he condemned any one to that kind of death, used to say simply,— "Take him to the Kadi."

Many of the punishments ordered by the Muslim law have fallen into disuse. For some time robbers have begun to be sent to the galleys, instead of having their hands cut off. In Soudan people are allowed to buy themselves off from condemnations, even for incest and murder.

In Darfur the most common punishments are imprisonment and stripes. The prison is an inclo-

sure without roof or flooring, in which the convict is thrown with irons on his feet and a collar round his neck. The gaolers are eunuchs. The prisoners are obliged to occupy themselves in tanning hides, and if they do not perform their appointed task in a proper time they are severely punished. If they oversleep themselves in the morning, they are dreadfully beaten for a long time. Those who are condemned for life have their irons rivetted on.

Among the Forians, they have what they call the bortoan-bau, or break-melon. When an individual is condemned to death by the Sultan, he says,—"Break the melon;" upon which the executioners seize the condemned man, and raising him in the air, drop him down several times head foremost until he be dead. Men are sometimes stretched between two posts and beaten with the prickly branches of a stinking tree, until death nearly ensues. Murderers are killed with a lance by the nearest relation of the victim. There is a commutation established for a broken tooth, or any other wound.

In Wadaï the punishments determined by the religious laws are applied according to the very terms of the Koran.* The Sultan has also the right to condemn to death, to stripes, or to imprisonment.

* It is worth while to reflect on the frightful state of society that must be produced by a consistent adherence to the laws of the Koran, which it is the fashion among sensualists in all times, and politicians at this particular moment, to praise directly, or by implication.

When he wants to put a criminal to death, he says to his Kabartou, "Take that man and crush him;" and he is immediately led out to the Fasher and killed with clubs. Stripes are administered with whips made of the hippopotamus' hide; and men are often known to receive a hundred or a thousand blows without a cry. Prisoners have sometimes their legs tied round trees, at other times their feet are put in a kind of fetter called a scorpion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Magic — Public Opinion — Story of an Elephant—A bold Orator — Too much of a Good Thing—Anecdote — Three Presents — A huge Pipe — Milk-drinking — Dress of the Wadaïans — Music — Frontlets — Amchinga—Dress—Duties of Women — Love — A Turguenak and a King's Slave — Intrigues — Their cause — A Story of Passion — Unfaithful Women — Afrits or Devils — A violent Lover — Morals in Soudan.

As in Darfur, hunters and blacksmiths in Wadaï form the lowest classes of the population. If a Shereef passes by a blacksmith's shop, he has the privilege of taking away any object he pleases. The origin of this custom was, that a Shereef once rubbed his hands with an incombustible unguent and carried a piece of red-hot iron, ever since which they have been thought to possess a magical power. I have been told in Wadaï that fire does not burn Shereefs, but I have never seen an example of this.

In Wadaï the Sultan has a discretionary power over individuals, but he cannot change the established custom. The slightest innovation might cost him his life. Sultan Saboun once wished to alter the grain measure; but the people refused to

comply, and my father was deputed to set forth before the Sultan the danger of an insurrection. Another time Saboun wished to coin money, and established a mint; but it was represented to him that the same proposition had been made, but had been rejected, for fear that it might destroy the simple customs of the country. Saboun abandoned his project. The Sultans of Soudan affect an imposing and terrific appearance, so that no one unaccustomed to address them can speak without fear. It is related that Sultan Tyrab, of Darfur, once sent to some Bedawin Arabs an elephant to feed and bring up. This huge animal committed great destruction, but no one dared to interfere with it. At last, however, the people went to the Sheikh and complained, saying,—"What an enemy we have here in this elephant! Why, when the Sultan sent it to thee, didst thou not observe that we were poor people, unable to bring up such a monstrous beast? Thou hast received this parasite without saying a word. He devours our provisions and destroys everything. Get rid of the accursed brute, or we will kill it."

"But," replied the Sheikh, "I should not dare to say these things to the Sultan."

"Take me with thee," quoth a Bedawin; "if thou art afraid, I will speak. I only ask one thing, that thou shouldst begin by saying, 'The elephant!' Then the Sultan will ask, 'What of the elephant?' and I will reply, the elephant behaves in such wise."

The Sheikh accordingly went one day with the

Bedawin, and entered the Fasher on a Friday. On coming to the gate of the palace, they saw a personage ride out on horseback, with tambourines beating and trumpets sounding.

"Is that the Sultan?" said the bold Bedawin to his companion.

"No, it is one of his viziers."

Then the orator began to tremble, and to say,—"How, then, is the Sultan?"

Immediately afterwards another personage came forth, surrounded by soldiers, dressed in brilliant garments, preceded by horsemen, and accompanied by music.

"That, at least, is our master!" quoth the Bedawin, stupified.

"No, it is only one of the grand viziers."

The poor man then began to understand the danger of his position. His heart leaped, and he was afraid. At this moment the Ab galloped into the Fasher, surrounded by a crowd of horsemen, and with prodigious pomp. The roaring of the tambourines was deafening.

"How terrible is the Sultan!" exclaimed the Bedawin, who, on learning that he was still mistaken, wished the earth would open and swallow him up. Then the Sultan himself came forth amidst the crash of cymbals, the roaring of drums, and the trampling of horses. It seemed as if heaven and earth were coming together. The Sultan halted, and the soldiers ranged themselves in two lines. Then the

Bedawin Sheikh advanced, and exclaimed aloud,—"May God protect our master, and make him victorious over his enemies!—The elephant!"

"What of the elephant?" said the Sultan.

The Sheikh winked at his companion, and whispered, "It is now thy turn to speak." But the unhappy orator had not a word to say.

"Why," exclaimed the Sultan, in a terrible voice, "what of the elephant?"

The Sheikh, seeing that he was to have no assistance, and fearing punishment, replied,—"The elephant—why, the elephant is unhappy because he is alone. We wish thee to give us another elephant to keep him company."

"Let them have another elephant," said the Sultan; and they accordingly departed, and returned to their tribe with a huge brute, bigger than the former one.

"What is this?" said the people; "we sent you to get rid of one nuisance, and you bring us another."

"Ah! my friends," said the orator, who now at length found his tongue, "there never was a man who has such presence of mind and neatness of expression as your Sheikh. Thank God, who has given you such a blessing!"

The second elephant was accepted, and no more was said.

Some poor devils of Wadaïans heard one day that honey was a marvellously sweet thing, and agreed to go to the Sultan and ask for a taste. They

accordingly went to Warah, and, waiting till the prince came out, prostrated themselves, and explained the nature of their visit. The Sultan flew into a passion, and exclaimed,—"Do you mean to make fun of me by coming to talk of a thing of so little importance? Let a whole skinful be brought." He was obeyed, and the poor fellows were ordered to eat the whole on pain of death. They soon began to be disgusted; their stomachs heaved; they could not go on. Then the Sultan ordered them to be shut up with the skin, and given nothing to eat until they had swallowed the whole.

Formerly the Sultans were equally simple with the peasants. Three men once raised three crops of onions, of red pepper, and of garlic, and each went with a camel-load to make a present to the Sultan. The latter, who did not know these vegetables in their natural shape, being told that they were condiments, was charmed with the handsome colour of the pepper, and put some into his mouth. He instantly felt a burning sensation, and exclaimed: "These people are rascals, and have come to poison me! let them be put in prison until they have eaten all that they have brought, and nothing else." The order was executed, and the three peasants were kept in confinement for three years, when they were let out; two of them afflicted with dreadful diseases, and the third, who had fed on garlic, in good health.

Some insatiable smokers, who had no money left to buy tobacco, determined to go and ask the Sultan

for some. The prince was angry, and ordered a huge pipe-bowl to be made, three cubits in height, and filled with tobacco, with ten tubes—the number of the beggars attached; and ordered them to smoke the whole. After a few whifs, however, they all fainted, and were sent away with a warning not again to make such absurd requests.

Formerly the Sultan of Wadaï was not allowed to drink milk; for, said the Wadaïans, if the Sultan drinks milk, what shall his subjects drink? At length, however, the prince took it into his head to have a milch cow; the people rose in insurrection and ordered him to get rid of it, and he was compelled to obey. This custom, however, is now abolished.

In great ceremonies the Wadaïans wear ample turbans, but the common head-dress is the tarboosh. Their chief garment is a loose gown, generally of black stuff, made of narrow stripes sewed together. Nearly every one carries a short sword, and a dagger tied to the arm above the elbow. When a man is appointed to any high post, the Sultan himself places a turban on his head.

In Wadaï the people do not enliven their amusements by music; the drums, tambourines, and trumpets are only used in public ceremonies. I have already mentioned the use of frontlets for the horses. These ornaments are much better worked in Darfur than in Wadaï. Indeed, all the trades have an inferior development in the latter country. The lances

used are much less handsome; on the other hand, the Wadaïans are much braver than the Forians.

The costume of the women of Wadaï resembles that of the Forian women; but they do not wear rings in their noses, replacing them by pieces of coral or wood. Their handsomest ornament is the amchinga, elegantly made of a number of crescents of silver, with coral and amber.

The Wadaïan women have nearly always a tooth-pick in their hands, and scarcely ever leave off using it except during sleep. Their teeth are beautifully white, and their mouths deliciously sweet. They wear a cloth tied round their loins, and a kind of cape made of a piece of cloth, with a hole in the middle to cover their shoulders and their bosom.

In general the Wadaïan men are robust, but not so black as the Forians and Bagirmians. They do not disdain, as do the Forians, the white colour, although the European complexion is not to their taste. The whole nation is large and well developed. Young girls are obliged to abstain from much food, for fear of acquiring too great *embonpoint*. The women perform the greater part of the fatiguing labour. They go to the market with two baskets, which they carry poised on their shoulders like a pair of scales. They work in the fields, fetch wood or water, and gather rice, tamarinds, and karobs. It is the duty of the men to make war, to weave and spin, and deal in the larger articles of trade, as cattle and slaves.

In Darfur and Wadaï the men mix freely night and day with the women. Girls and married women do not scruple to pass their nights with those who please them. Nothing can prevent lovers from meeting. A Turguenak became enamoured of one of the concubine slaves of Sultan Saboun, and was beloved by her also; yet the Sultan was so fond of her that he had taken her with him on the Tamah war. She corrupted the slaves, men and women, who served and surrounded her, and escaped from the tent of the Sultan at night to meet her lover. But this came to the knowledge of Saboun, who put her to death, and gave to his Viziers and Ulemas all her accomplices, who were very beautiful. My father received two. "When," he used to say, "Saboun told me to take my choice, I did not know which to prefer; as each passed before me she seemed more beautiful than the former. I was embarrassed; but, fearing to appear ridiculous by my indecision, I shut my eyes, and advancing thus, seized two at hap-hazard." My father afterwards learned that one of these girls had long been in love with the Kamkolak Kiderimy, and accordingly sold her to him for a horse worth four slaves, ten young girls of six spans, and a magnificent camel. The other, called Zoheirah, was beloved by my father for some time; but he sold her at Tunis because she misbehaved herself.

I have already related how the old women in Darfur introduce youths dressed as girls into harems. These intrigues, in my opinion, are caused by the

system of having so vast a number of women as the property of one man. Evidently there is disproportion in this; and we must not be surprised if the women, under these circumstances, in the fullness of youth, undergo all kinds of dangers. It is customary in Wadaï not to force the affections of women. If a girl attaches herself to any one, her choice is left free; and if, out of ten suitors, one is distinctly chosen, the nine others are forbidden ever afterwards to address her, except as "my sister," to which she replies, "my brother." But if, after her first choice, she transfer her affections to any other of the nine, then is the beginning of jealousy and enmity. Now, it happened that two friends became enamoured of a beautiful girl, and requested her to choose between them. She did so, and the other said to her, "Thou art now my sister." But, some time afterwards, she became weary of her first lover, and desired the other, whose passion also revived. But he feared, if he confessed his sentiments, to incur the reproaches of his friends and the hatred of his rival, and to be the cause of misfortune. He therefore took his friend apart, and said to him,—"Thou knowest that women are the causes of collision and struggles between men; learn that thy mistress wishes to separate from thee, and throw herself into my arms; but I fear to accept her, lest we should become enemies. If thou wishest to know the truth, I will seek an interview, and thou shalt hide thyself, and afterwards thou shalt be free to choose whether thou wilt abandon her with re-

proaches, or whether I shall go away and remain absent until she has forgotten me." This plan was agreed upon, and the interview took place in the hearing of the first lover. The girl did not scruple to avow her new affection, declared that she repented of her first choice, said that love was replaced by hatred, and showed herself willing to abandon herself to new caresses. Upon this the hidden lover, unable to contain himself, rushed forward and stabbed her. Then the two friends agreed to cut her in pieces and bury her, which they did; and no one knew the truth until after the death of the murderer. Ah! how perfidious are women! May Heaven never, never forgive an unfaithful woman! The mercy of God be on the author of the following words:—

"Of women, there are certainly some that are worth eighty she-camels; but there are others not worth the skin of a foal. May God, in his goodness, burn all unfaithful women in hell for ever!" *

I have already said that the Wadaïans are brave. This character is more strongly developed, of course, in the young men, when their heads are heated with inebriating drinks. Their conversation, at such times, becomes often coarse and brutal, and quarrels, in which blood is shed, often arise. Those who are especially distinguished for courage and pride are

* There is something very ludicrous in this excessive severity against women expressed by a man like the Sheikh. The same one-sided feeling, in a mitigated form, dictated a clause in the proposed divorce bill of this last session.

called Afrits, or devils. These men at once render themselves terrible by their murders and robberies. They frequently exercise their violence near the wells of Saboun, which are not far from the Fasher, and in more distant places their boldness is still greater. Whenever one of these Afrits loves a woman, he marries her in spite of all opposition. One of them declared his love for a young girl, and asked her in marriage; but she detested and refused him. He persisted, and went every evening, killing the suitors he found there. He thus frightened every one away, but without succeeding in winning her affections. She almost passed the marriageable age. However, one day, a stranger beheld her at the market-place, and loved her, and followed her, and accosted her, declaring his sentiments.

"In truth," said she, "thou art a handsome fellow, and I love thee already; but, as the proverb says, 'there is an obstacle in the way of the ass.'"

"Art thou married?"

"No."

"What withholds thee, then?"

"What? why, one of those savage Afrits has forbidden any one to approach me."

"Why does he not marry thee?"

"I do not love him, and will not have him."

"Is he related to thee?"

"No! by Heaven!"

"Well, then, fear nothing, and I will release thee from him."

"That is not so easy," said she; "and yet, by Heaven, I am not a coward, and do not fear the Afrit! It is for thee that I fear, lest he assassinate thee."

"Be easy on that point," replied he; "but only show me thy dwelling."

She did so; and at nightfall the stranger came, and they sat down, and began to talk quietly together, he sitting with his leg over that of the young girl. The Afrit soon came in, and saw them sitting together. The girl wished to move away, but her new lover kept her in her position, and continued the conversation. The Afrit then exclaimed, "Who allowed thee to come here?" but obtained no answer. He spoke twice more, and then, rushing forward, stabbed the stranger through the thigh, until he reached that of the girl. She tried to escape, but could not; and the Afrit, struck dumb by the phlegm of his rival, who still did not move, drew forth his weapon, and wished to escape. But he was now seized and cast to the ground, and humiliated, and compelled to swear that he would never again interfere with the girl, who was soon afterwards united in marriage with her deliverer. Similar adventures are of frequent occurrence in Wadaï.

A singular feature in the character of the Wadaïans is, that they are jealous of a mistress, but take no care to interfere with the conduct of their sisters or daughters. They even often seek to bring admirers to their sisters, by praising their beauty and physical qualities. And if any one is thus in-

cited to come forward as a suitor, the brother pleads for him, and is angry if he be rejected. Sometimes the Wadaïans carry their complaisance so far, that they take friends to their wives, and leave them with them. The women themselves are licentiously inclined, and often have many lovers. In fact, throughout all Soudan, love seems to be the great occupation. It runs fiery through the veins of the blacks, as sap runs through the veins of trees. No one thinks it a duty to conceal the object of passion, except when danger may arise. Otherwise, he goes about publishing the name of her he loves, and shouting it in every ear. But let us now pause, for if we dwell too long upon one subject we shall engender weariness.

CHAPTER IX.

Arms in Soudan—Tactics—Emulation on the Field—Materials of Weapons—Archers—War-Song—Breeds of Horses—Education—Food—Price of Horses—Story of a Tamahan—Winged and Speaking Horses—Metempsychosis—Poets—Kings in War—Slave-hunts, manner of—The Firman—Collecting Capital—Recruits—Sultan of the Hunt—Sharing the Spoil—Other Regulations—Grain-Nests—Treatment of Slaves—Mortality—Justification of Slavery—Savage love of Country—Manners.

The people of Soudan do not, in general, possess muskets, or cannons, or fortresses. In battle, their horsemen are armed with the javelin and the sabre, and the footmen with the spear or the arrow. The latter has a buckler to protect himself, and the former a helmet or coat of mail, or a padded tunic. Horses are covered with thick housing to protect them against injury.

Each people has a certain traditional system of tactics, which it clings to, and will not alter or improve in any way. The Forians divide their army into five divisions,—the vanguard, the rear-guard, the main body, and the right and left wings. The vedettes and scouts are spread all around during the march. Every great functionary has a military

character. The flags or standards are always placed in front of the Sultan, under the command of the king and a body of chosen men. The Forian flags are either red or white, and so are those of Wadaï, except that in the latter country the red are more common. The Forian Sultan is preceded by ten banners, and the Wadaïan by at least thirty, which are never lowered unless the prince is killed or taken prisoner. No Sultan must fly after a battle, so that in case of defeat he must be killed or taken prisoner. As long as the fight lasts, the drums do not cease a moment to beat.

On the eve of a battle, each party chooses some sign by which the soldiers are to be distinguished; as, for example, a band of bark round the right wrist. In the absence of this precaution, as soon as the *mêlée* begins, it would be impossible to know friends from enemies, for there are no uniforms and no distinctions of colour.

When the Forian troops charge an enemy they display great animation. The horsemen brandish their swords, and each chief of a Kardous, or squadron, sets up a song, to which his men reply. At the time of the revolt of Mohammed Kourra I heard an Emin sing these words:—"O-nas dio-ba-in," which means, "The word which you have in you;" and the soldiers replied, Kel-boa—"Come, say it." Then the chief went on, "O-nas dio-Keih," and the soldiers answered, Kel-boa ye kel-boa—"Come, say it: ha! ha! say it." In this way they worked

up their courage, and each seemed to become an inexpugnable tower.

The armour of the Forians is of various kinds, consisting of casques with falls of mail, that cover the shoulders and protect the neck, or of mere head-pieces. Some horsemen have cuirasses covered with crocodiles' skin; and, in the infantry, I have seen bucklers made of the same material. When a cavalier is fully armed and equipped, mounted upon a horse completely clothed with red, he does in reality present a terrible appearance, even alone; but a thousand men, thus arranged, form a really terrific spectacle. When a high-placed functionary has been removed, and another by intrigue substituted, the two generally consider themselves as enemies. When, therefore, a battle begins, the man who has been disgraced seeks out his rival, and cries:—Ya wendai Bism Illah,—"Come, comrade, on, in the name of God." If the person thus challenged complies, and behaves with courage, no more is said; but, if not, the affair is reported to the Sultan, and the former occupant is restored to his place. Similar challenges take place between subjects who have never occupied any position. If one of them plays the poltroon, his wife generally asks for a divorce, and no one seeks his daughter or his sister in marriage.

Foot soldiers, when they go into battle, collect their drapery like a shawl round their waist, and tuck up their sleeves. Each man has a buckler and

three, four, or five lances, one of which is a long pike, whilst the others are javelins for throwing. It was Zou-Yezen, a Hamyaritic prince, who first armed the tops of lances with iron. Before his time sharp horns were used. There are various kinds of spears used in Darfur, the shafts of which are sometimes made of ebony wood, and sometimes of hard roots of trees straightened by fire. The iron heads now used are of various forms, some of them being smooth, others serrated, others with heavy balls of iron, to increase the force of the blow. Formerly the people of Soudan used to have large bucklers as high as themselves; but these were found to be inconvenient, and small shields used with dexterity supply their place. The best are made of the skin of an aquatic animal called issins. Others are manufactured, as I have said, of the skin of the crocodile, or of the rhinoceros. The worst are those made of elephant-skin, which, though thick, are easily pierced by a lance. Bows and arrows are not used by the Muslim blacks of Soudan, but they have companies of archers composed of Pagan slaves, who form a redoubtable element in their armies. In the time of the revolt of Sheikh Kourra, it was these slave-archers who prevented, one evening after dark, the insurgents from penetrating into the dwelling of the Sultan. I was a witness of this scene. The archers, to the number of a thousand, overwhelmed the partisans of Kourra with a shower of arrows, and forced them to retreat with great loss.

The archers do not aim straight at the enemy, but cause their arrows to describe a curve in the air. The heads are of the same form as those of the lances, and are often so slightly fixed to the reed that they are left in the wound. They are often poisoned. The bows are wonderfully small, scarcely more than a span in length, and the arrows are still shorter. The wood used is very hard, and the strings are made of the tendons of buffaloes. The quivers consist in a little sack, in which are carried sometimes as many as two hundred arrows.

When the infantry is ranged in order of battle, it sings various kinds of songs; for example, this one:—"Lellee Lellee, let us go. The dust of the battle rises in the east. Ask the buffalo if his helmet be brilliant. The buffalo is in the midst of our horsemen. Fear shame, soldiers; fear shame. The buffalo shall meet with his like." This song, chanted in unison by a vast body of soldiers, appeared to me in the original very exciting, but, like all other songs, it loses by translation. The captains begin the first line, and the men take up the burthen. The corps of Fertyt, specially attached to the person of the prince, sing a song of which I could never obtain any translation. These slaves are in great number in Darfur, but spread throughout the country at separate stations.

Horses form, for the Soudan populations, one of the most precious articles of property. The Prophet said,—"To the manes of coursers shall be attached

victory to the end of the world." The Dongola and Egyptian breeds are much sought after in Darfur. The former have long legs, brilliant coats, and are generally black; but the Egyptian horses are better proportioned and more graceful, and are easily trained for war. They are generally bay. Those which are preferred are of middle height, with moderately long legs, slim and short barrels, broad buttocks, and well-developed chest. The grooms train them to singular habits, teaching them cleanliness during great ceremonies, and compelling them, when necessary, to remain for hours perfectly tranquil, like statues. If any horse ridden by the Sultan commits any act of impropriety, he is immediately dismounted and sent home to be beaten.

When I was in Darfur I often admired the elegance and grace of the steeds of the Sultan. On asking the grooms how they succeeded in producing these qualities, I was told that the animals were fed on green food from the neighbourhood of Mount Koussa, and on a kind of paste made of millet mixed with honey. Every morning also they drink warm milk.

The horses of Forian breed are abominable hacks, with round bellies and savage characters. I never saw such indocile brutes. It is almost impossible to keep them to any particular course. They are, however, very hard and sturdy, and capable of supporting immense fatigue.

But the best horses in Darfur are those of the

Bedawin Arabs, which are directly derived from Arabia. They are carefully fed in the pasturages, given warm milk to drink, and constantly rubbed down with melted butter. The Bedawin, in his solitary plains, fasten for the night, to the leg of his horse, an iron shackle with a long chain, fixed to his bed. The horse, accustomed to attacks, to flights, to forays, and incursions of every kind, hears the slightest noise in the dark, and, if it be at all suspicious, neighs and stamps on the ground to wake its master. By day it is always piquetted near the tent. At whatever hour it may be, as soon as any cry of alarm is heard, the women of the tribe instantly saddle the horses, whilst the Bedawin gets ready his arms, so that, in the twinkling of an eye, there is a body of cavalry ready to ride out of the camp.*

The Arabs value their horses at extravagant prices, especially if they have acquired any reputation. Sometimes a four-year-old mare with its foal sells for the price of a hundred cows. The dearest horses are the runners of three kamins, or relays; for there are steeds which run races of one, two, or three kamins. Sometimes a horse is pitted to run

* I have myself noticed the rapidity with which a Bedawin encampment prepares to meet what may seem to be a surprise. When our caravan rose over the little hills that command the settlement of Mudar, scarcely a minute elapsed before the women were engaged in driving away the cattle on the opposite side, whilst the men came running to meet us, imagining us to be an attacking party.

three relays, and starts with ten competitors for the distance of an hour. Then there are ten other competitors ready to take up the race, and so on for another time. It often happens that a horse wins these three races successively. In Darfur and Wadaï there are sometimes found horses worthy of emulating the Arabs for their swiftness and vigour. The following narrative is curious, in reference to this subject:—An inhabitant of Dar-Tamah once bought a very young foal of noble blood, and trained it with most careful attention. When it was old enough he exercised it constantly, and found that it had no rival in speed. It happens that, between Tamah and Wadaï, there is a ravine or chasm in the earth, about two kosabah broad, that is to say, about six fathoms. The Tamahan resolved to peril his life, and see if he could leap this ravine. He succeeded several times, and, being now sure of his safety, began riding him to the border provinces of Wadaï, and hanging about the wells where the young girls used to come and fetch water. Whenever he perceived any one that pleased him by her beauty, he used to snatch her up and ride away with her. Her friends would pursue, thinking that the ravine would be an insurmountable obstacle to his flight. But the bold Tamahan always leaped the chasm and escaped in safety.*

In some countries of Soudan there exist very singular ideas relative to horses. Among others, it

* Here follows a singular story, the principal incident of which, however, can scarcely be adapted to European reading.

is said that a man had a magnificent courser, of whom he was passionately fond, and visited night and day. One night, however, he went softly, at an unaccustomed hour, to see him, and beheld great wings spreading out from his side. The man was petrified with fear, and the horse, suddenly closing up and concealing his wings, said,—"The first time that thou comest, without warning me of thy approach, thou shalt repent." The people of Darfur, in fact, are persuaded that the swiftness of horses arises from their having real, but invisible, wings. They also believe that these animals have a language of their own, and possess certain human sentiments, as, for example, modesty. On certain occasions they throw great veils over their stallions and their mares.

A Forian possessed a horse which had often saved his life by his speed, and which he carefully tended. His wife died and he married again. The new wife sometimes gave the horse its ration mixed with dust, and left the litter untidy. The man, too, since his new marriage, no longer attended on his beast with the same care. One day he was in great danger and could not escape. He was made prisoner with his horse and reduced to groom it. He now carefully cleaned and attended on the animal, who one day said to him,—"This is the recompense of the man who neglects his horse." The man was frightened and remained still, and the horse went on,—"Fear nothing, there is no harm. Wilt

thou promise me, if I restore thee to liberty, always to have the same care of me that thou hast now?" "I promise it." "Well, then, unloose me, mount, and fear not." The Forian did as he was required, and succeeded, in spite of a pursuit, in escaping.

The Temourkch have fancies of a different kind. They believe that, when one of them dies, after remaining three days in his tomb, he is transported to another country, and marries a new wife. The Massalit imagine that every one of them, after death, passes into the body of some animal—of a hyæna, for example, or a cat.

To return to the subject of horses. Bays, with white feet and a white star on the forehead, are often celebrated by poets, who improvise verses for the sake of reward, in the presence of the Sultan. They are generally nomadic Arabs; the blacks having little poetical taste. Sometimes, under learned princes, there have been Ulemas distinguished as poets. The Forians derive auguries from certain motions of their horses. If they stretch the fore legs abroad, victory is expected; but if the hind legs, defeat.

All these customs and ideas, which I have described as Forian, may be applied almost exactly to Wadaï, especially those which have reference to war. The Wadaïans, however, are less particular in their military adornments, and do not sing in battle.

The Fertyt do not possess horses—oxen are the only domestic animals they know. In most tribes

the women act as beasts of burthen. When in war, they place their king on a kind of ebony stool, borne by relays of four men.

If they are defeated, they set his majesty down and leave him, for no Sultan must fly. However, according to ancient custom, no prince is killed in a *mêlée*, except by accident. If he be taken prisoner, he is generally treated with respect. Kadis, Ulemas, and musicians, are also spared, if taken, and set free. It is not customary, however, if free women and children are taken, to sell them as slaves, although Saboun did so, as an exemplary punishment, when he took Bagirmeh.

The Ghazwah, or slave-hunts, in Dar-Fertyt, and amongst the Jenakherah, are carried on in a different manner in Darfur and Wadaï. In the latter country, the Sultan sends one of his governors with a troop, chosen beforehand, to which no strangers attach themselves; but in Darfur things are managed differently. There, even a private individual, if he thinks himself capable of conducting a Ghazwah, demands a salatieh, and, if he obtains it, sets out with as many people as he can collect.

This is the way in which a complete Ghazia, or Ghazwah, is managed. He who can make a present to the Sultan, and who has some friend at court, goes to the Fasher in the first day of summer, some time before the beginning of the rains. The best offering to make to a Sultan is a horse ready bridled and saddled, with a slave to lead him. If the prince accepts

the present, and permits the expedition, he gives to the solicitor a salatieh, that is to say, a tall lance, and delivers a permission of excursion, conceived, for example, in the following terms:—

"In the name of the Great Sultan, the refuge and the support of all, the glory of the Arab kings and of the non-Arab kings, master of the neck of all nations, sovereign of the two lands and the two seas, servant of the two holy cities, putting his hope in the God of justice and longanimity, the Sultan Mohammed Fadhl, the victorious, to all those who these presents may see, emins, warriors, shartai, damleg, and chiefs of our armies,

"We, Sultan favoured of God, sustained by his special grace, victorious Sultan, have gratified with our favours and our benevolence *such an one*, son of *such an one*, and have given to him a salatieh to conduct an expedition into Dar-Fertyt, and make a Ghazwah, in the direction of *such a tribe*. All those who may accompany him in his enterprise shall be free from blame on our part—in testimony of which the present firman has emanated from our sublime generosity and our noble bounties. Far, far, may all opposition be, all acts of malevolence, against this mandate. We have recommended to the bearer of this permission to act with justice towards those who may follow this expedition, and to conduct himself with the equity and the moderation which the fear of God inspires, as regards the portion of slaves that is to fall to his share. Salutations."

Supplied with the firman of this kind, and with the salatieh, which confers the authority of chief of a Ghazwah, the solicitor leaves the dwelling of the Sultan, and, accompanied by one or two servants, places himself on the great square of the Fasher. There he crouches on a carpet which is spread upon the ground, and the salatieh is stuck up before him. Meanwhile a domestic beats a tambourine. People begin to collect from all sides and crowd around him, and learn that he has been named chief of a Ghazwah, and has obtained a firman. Merchants soon come forward with stuffs for garments. The chief buys as much as he pleases, according to the presumed profit of his expedition, and always on credit. The price varies according to circumstances. For example, when a merchant wishes himself to accompany the expedition, and the quantity of goods he has sold is worth only one slave at the Fasher, the chief of the Ghazwah agrees to deliver five or six slaves in the Dar-Fertyt itself; but if, on the contrary, the merchant does not choose to follow the expedition, and prefers waiting till it returns, he agrees to receive only two or three slaves. When the bargain is concluded, the master of the salatieh gives to the merchant a written acknowledgment. In this way he collects, not only garments, but horses, camels, asses, &c. Some chiefs, who inspire confidence, contract in this way for more than five or six hundred slaves.

While these preliminaries are going on, many people come and offer to associate themselves with

the leader of the expedition; and he then causes to be transcribed several copies of his firman, and gives one to each, with a horse or camel for the journey. He also points out to these, his first hunting companions, the road they are to take, and divides them into ten squads, each of which has a chief. The rendezvous is always beyond the southern limits of Darfur.

Each chief of a squad now takes a different route, and passes through the towns and villages beating a tambourine, collecting the inhabitants, communicating the contents of the firman, pointing out the conditions offered by the undertaker of the hunt, and promising, for example, that the owner of the salatieh will only take, at the first jebayeh, or division of spoil, the third of the slaves which each hunter has taken, and at the second division a quarter. Generally a certain number of young Forians, of poor families, join the expedition.

The master of the salatieh also stops in the places which he traverses to collect companions, and having rested awhile in his own village, proceeds to the general rendezvous. Once there, he takes the title of Sultan, and composes a kind of court out of those to whom he has delivered copies of the firman. There have been sultans of Ghazwah who have found themselves at the head of nine or ten thousand people or more. His court is a perfect imitation of the court of the real Sultan. He delivers clothes to his body-guard, and distributes to them his camels, his asses, and his horses. Some-

times a great many people come flocking in without having been recruited; but all are obliged to admit the absolute authority of this temporary sultan.

The rules of distribution of the products of the hunt are fixed and known. All slaves taken without resistance fall to the lot of the sultan, amongst whose perquisites, likewise, are the presents given by the kings of the adjoining provinces. The expedition pushes on as far as it can, and then one evening it is announced that the division of profit is to be made the next day. This division takes place as follows:—The sultan causes a circular enclosure, or zeribeh; with two openings, to be made. The people of the Ghazwah come early in the morning with the slaves they have caught. If the sultan is reasonable, he takes only a third, but he sometimes exacts one-half. The zeribeh is made of prickly branches. The sultan sits in the middle, and his servants station themselves at the issues. Then all the slave-catchers, one by one, bring in their lots, the number of which is immediately written down. If there are only two, the sultan takes the better, and the other is left to his owner, who receives a paper, certifying that he has submitted to the law of partition. He who has only taken one slave is put aside until another in the same predicament comes, when the sultan takes one and leaves the other to be divided. All those kept by the sultan remain in the zeribeh. This ceremony lasts sometimes ten days, or even a month.

When the division has been made, the master of the salatieh pays his debts, and then continues the hunt, returning, however, towards Darfur. When within a few days' march there is a second division made.

The sultan is entitled to every disputed slave, and to the property of all who die, without direct heirs, on the road. He, however, is obliged to take from his share the presents to be made to the Sultan and to the great people who have assisted him in obtaining his privilege.

The master of a salatieh, when the excursion has been fortunate, easily acquits all expenses, pays his debts, makes the necessary presents, and has a hundred slaves left for himself. Besides this, the horses, the camels, the asses, and all the harness and baggage brought back, remain as his property. He resumes possession of everything he has distributed, except the garments. In fine, each individual returns to his country with the booty which, by the grace of God, he has been able to take.

The leader of a hunt always treats with consideration the people who compose his court, and sometimes does not take from them any of their share. On the other hand, it is they who watch over his safety, and attend to him. At each halt they get ready a shelter for him, and send people forward to prepare each station. For this purpose, they bring with them from Darfur skins of animals, millet-stalks, and poles sufficient to make every day

an enclosure or dwelling for the sultan. These materials are carried from camp to camp. In fine, the whole ceremonial of this expedition resembles the march of a real Sultan.

When the troops surround one of the stations of the Fertyt, and the inhabitants yield without resistance, the sultan takes the chief as a prisoner, treats him honourably, gives him a dress, and afterwards liberates him; but he seizes on all the grown men, the youths, the women, and girls, leaving only the old people and those who do not seem to be in a state to undergo the fatigues of a journey. The leader of a hunt may form or break alliances with tribes who agree to become tributary to Darfur; but he is obliged to act according to the rules of justice and equity. At any rate, he is induced to behave well towards his subordinates, by the hope of taking them along with him another year.

One of the duties of the officers of the sultan is to search out the nests in which the Fertyt hide their grain; for, finding themselves constantly attacked by their neighbours, these people conceal their provisions in the trees so carefully, that an unaccustomed traveller would never suspect their existence. They choose for this purpose trees which are very leafy and tufty. They cut a certain number of branches, with which they make a kind of large hurdle; on this they spread, first, a bed of leaves, and then a bed of millet-husks; then they build thereon a little conical hut, in which they pile their

grain, and, closing up the opening, leave it until they require it for their use. The thickness of the leaves, and the intricacy of the branches, entirely conceal these aërial barns. The whole country is covered with monstrous trees growing in forests, so that it is not easy to discover these stores.

The Fertyt who inhabit the highlands bury their grain in matmourah, or deep pits, lined with millet leaves. The Forians also keep their corn in matmourah, though the rich deposit their harvests in vast sheds.

The men who obtain permission to go upon slave-hunts have their itinerary marked down beforehand, and it is forbidden to overpass the limits set. This is done to prevent different Ghazwah from meeting and fighting one with the other. The Sultan sometimes delivers sixty or seventy salatieh in the course of a year; but many of these expeditions are not important in number. They sometimes consist of as few as fifteen men. These hunts bring into the hands of the Forians a considerable number of slaves. If they all arrived in Darfur, the country would be overstocked; but many of them die of ill-treatment during the journey, or are killed. If a slave, from fatigue or other reasons, determines not to proceed, he sits down and says, "Kongorongo," that is to say, "Kill me." He is instantly killed with clubs in presence of his companions, in order to frighten them, and deter them from imitating his example. Women are treated in the same manner. Many of the pri-

soners die of fatigue by the way, and others of diarrhœa, caused by change of food. Sometimes epidemic diseases, such as dysentery, seize the whole flock, and nearly all perish. Two or three out of twenty are often all that survive. On arriving in Darfur many also perish from the effects of the climate, though such as are treated with gentleness, and are submitted to a proper regimen, generally survive. Acclimated slaves sell for a much higher price than those who have been recently brought.

But, in any case, this sudden change of condition exposes the slaves to dangerous diseases. Moreover, melancholy seizes them, especially if they fear to be sold to stranger Arabs. They are persuaded that these Arabs are in want of meat, and come and buy them for food, and to use their brains for soap, and their blood for dyeing garments red. This belief is deeply implanted in the minds of all the slaves, and the Forians take advantage of it to reduce the indocile by fear. It is sufficient to threaten to sell them to the Jellabs to bring them to a sense of duty. The slaves do not get quit of their fear until they have been some time in the hands of the Arabs; but, during the whole length of the journey, they remain in continual terror. If we add to this cause the excessive fatigue of the march, the extremes of heat and cold in the deserts, it will not appear surprising that they die by thousands on the way. Only the very strong or the very fortunate reach as far as Egypt. I have seen Jellabs leave Wadaï with a

hundred slaves, and lose them all by cold; and others have been deprived of still greater numbers by heat and thirst; whilst others, again, out of a single flock, find not one wanting. All this depends on the will of the Most High.

Our holy law permits the sale and exportation of slaves, but on the express condition that we should act with the fear of God before our eyes; which sentiment, indeed, should be the guide of all our actions. The reasons by which slavery is justified are these:— God has commanded his Prophet, the Prophet of Islam, to announce the Divine law to men, to call them to believe in the true God, and to employ the force of arms to constrain unbelievers to embrace the true faith. According to the Divine word itself, war is the legitimate and holy means to bring men under the yoke of religion; for as soon as the infidels feel the arms of Islam, and see their power humiliated, and their families led away into slavery, they will desire to enter into the right way, in order to preserve their persons and their goods. If they resist, and are obstinate in their unbelief, it is necessary to march in arms against them. However, before resorting to this extreme means, we must invite them to submit to the law of Islam, and warn them many times on the misfortunes they will bring upon themselves by their incredulity.

But the Prophet has also authorised the ransom of prisoners. "After the fight," he says, "you may give liberty to prisoners or accept a ransom for them,

in order to put a stop to the calamities of war. As for those who obstinately repel my law, and reject the religion of Islam, offer them the choice between war and the obligation of an annual tribute, by which they may buy security and life. If they take up arms against you, whoever is made captive shall be sold." Nevertheless, all men, as children of Adam, are equal; the only difference being, that some have adopted the faith of Islam, and others a different, that is, an erroneous faith.

The inhabitants of Muslim Soudan, in their excursions against the idolaters, do not observe what is prescribed by the word of God, and never call upon them before the attack to embrace Islamism. They rush suddenly on the tribes of the Fertyt and Jenakherah, and, without preliminaries, without appeal to faith, without pacific attempts at proselytism, they assail, combat, take them as slaves, and sell them. But the fact of capture once accomplished, these people, being idolaters, it becomes lawful for Muslims to sell them. He who has acquired possession of a slave, man or woman, is bound to conduct himself towards him or her according to the principles of justice and religion. He must not exact from his slaves too great an amount of work. He must feed them with the food which he prepares for himself and his family, and he must clothe them with care; for a slave is likewise the creature of God.

Captives are treated in exactly the same manner in Darfur and Wadaï, but there is a difference in the

way in which slave-hunts are carried on. In the former country, although the authority comes direct from the Sultan, he has nothing to do with the details. But in Wadaï, where there is greater respect for the sovereign power, a general is chosen to perform a Ghazwah, and nearly the whole product goes into the hands of the Sultan. The slaves taken on these occasions are all equally without belief in God, without knowledge of a Prophet or revelation, without religion or civil law. They adore blocks of stone, and build chapels for these divinities, and make offerings to them of lances and rods of iron. I had once a slave from Dar-Binah, who, hearing mention of God, observed that his God was much greater than ours. I asked him what he meant, and he said his God was so large, holding his hands at a certain distance the one from the other. I told him that there was only one God for all the world, for all countries, and all climates; that he was great, powerful, and invisible; and I repeated these words until my slave understood them. The ignorance of these people, and their want of authoritative traditions, render it easy to instil a new religion into them. I have seen a young girl learn the Muslim profession of faith the very day of her capture, and repeat it without emotion or surprise.

These people are wonderfully ignorant, and only learn that there are other men on the face of the earth besides themselves by the periodical appearance of the Ghazwah. They have many singular

customs; among others, they are very particular in preventing marriage within certain degrees of consanguinity. This is more remarkable, because both sexes constantly mix together nearly entirely naked. Women and men wear only a little apron, or cover themselves with leaves. By what inspiration have they been able to establish and preserve more rigid restrictions than Muslims?

All these people lead a poor and miserable life; yet they passionately love their country, and cling to the place which has given them birth. If they leave their villages and their huts, or are taken away into slavery, their thoughts and their desires carry them constantly back to their country. In their childlike simplicity they often fly away from their masters, to endeavour to return to their miserable dwelling-places; and, when they are pursued, they are always found toiling back on the direct road. They are so simple-minded, that although every year their country is ravaged by slave-hunts, those that escape always return to the old spot and reconstruct their villages, and wait until they are again disturbed.

I have already said that they take one precaution, namely, to hide their store of grain in the trees. Some also build their dwelling-places there, cutting out a space amidst the branches, and constructing a conical hut, well secured against the rain. To this nest the Fertyt and his wife climb up by means of the nobs and projections of the trunk.

Sometimes a single tree bears the grain-store and the hut; but they are generally separate.

These savages have wonderful skill in certain arts. The shafts of their javelins and lances are admirably polished; and the ebony stools they make would do credit to the workshops of the most civilised nations. But, when we consider their miserable existence, and how they are deprived of all that contributes to the enjoyment of life, such as agreeable food and proper garments, we must class them among the lowest savages. Glory be to the Eternal, who has distributed societies in various forms, according to his pleasure!

CHAPTER X.

Stay in Darfur—Sheikh desires to depart—Presents of Saboun—Inspectors—A Fair in the Desert—A Guide—A Blood-feud—The Well of Daum—Hostile Tribe—A Flag of Truce—Attack—An Interview—A Camel for a Camel—A Murder—Harassing March—The Tibboo-Reshad—An Odd Sultan—Fresh Persecution—Hungry Majesties—Loss of Three Slaves and an Ass—The Sheikh in Love—Departure—Tibboo Camels—Killing the Devil—Character—Thirst of the Desert.

When I arrived in Wadaï, my father, as I have said, had departed for Tunis. He thought it was my fault that I had delayed so long to come and join him; for he had written to the Sultan of Darfur and the Fakih Malik, praying them to allow me to depart. Confiding, therefore, the care of his house, his children, and his crops, to my uncle Zarouk, he had departed. This annoyed me much, and I resolved not to lay down the staff of the traveller, but to hasten after my father. The kindness of Sultan Saboun, however, made me stay. He sent me as presents many fine horses, beautiful slaves, and robes of price, which softened my sorrow. But as Ahmed-el-Fasi had succeeded my father in the post of vizier, and was a personal enemy, I soon

found that he was undermining me. The Sultan began to look at me with coldness, and his presents ceased.

On the other hand, my uncle Zarouk seized on the revenue of my land, and gave me only sufficient to prevent my dying of hunger. He forbade me all interference in the management of my father's property, telling me that I should spend it foolishly. For these reasons I was soon disgusted with Wadaï, and asked permission of the Sultan to leave the country and depart for Fezzan. The yearly caravan was preparing to start. The permission I required was easily accorded by means of the Shereef Ahmed. I soon got ready, bought water-skins, provisions, and other necessary articles, and the day was at length fixed. Then I begged of Sultan Saboun some camels to carry my baggage; but he only sent me one young one, incapable as yet of undergoing the fatigue of travelling and carrying a burden. I complained aloud; but the Shereef Ahmed abused me for my greediness, and said the Sultan owed me nothing. I suppressed my disappointment, and exchanged the young camel and a little additional money for a strong one, and thereupon left Warah. But the caravan had scarcely reached the district of the Beni-Mahamyd, on the edge of the desert, when some messengers from Saboun brought me as a present from him three young slave-girls, a male slave, two excellent camels, and a fat bull, with which to make *cadyd*, or dried meat. We killed the bull at

once, and began to prepare the cadyd, giving thanks to the Sultan. When the meat was dried we filled our skins once more and departed. We had already received the visit of the inspectors, whose business it is to see that we are not taking away any free persons into slavery. Every slave in the caravan, young and old, was questioned individually. The inspectors liberate every one who can show himself to be of free origin, or prove that he was a Muslim before he was taken; also, any slave that may have been fraudulently taken from his owner.

For five days at the outset of our journey we traversed great plains of pasturage, where the Mahamyd wander with their flocks. At the end of this time we reached a well, at which it is customary for the Arabs, even Bidegats from the north-east of Wadaï and other wandering tribes, to encamp and meet the caravan,—holding a kind of fair,—selling or letting out to the Jellabs, or the travellers, provisions, camels, utensils for the journey, skins, ropes, &c. God is my witness that I forget the name of the well. We halted there two days, and the camels were turned loose to feed.

Five days more took us to the well of Daum, so called from the trees of that name that surround it. Now it happened that our guide, or caravan master, named Ahmed, was an old man, who had passed the vicissitudes of this life. He belonged to a tribe of the Tibboos, named in Fezzan the Tibboo-Reshad, —or Tibboos of the Mountains. Ahmed had formerly

killed a member of another tribe; and ever since the people had been waiting for the opportunity of vengeance. After the accident, the murderer had fled to Dar-Seleih. Here he remained ten years, not daring to return to his tribe; but at length the love of home became too strong, and he desired to see his country, and the huts thereof, with his ancient dwelling-place. He believed that in ten years his visit would be forgotten; and he departed with our caravan as a guide, leaving a comfortable position in Wadaï, where he had amassed wealth, which, along with his age, produced him great respect, and allowed him to fear nothing but God.

When he started with us he had with him more than a hundred and thirty persons, all relatives. The rest of the caravan was composed of fifteen Wadaïans and five Arabs, myself, a man of Tripoli, named the Reis Abdallah; a Fezzani, Mohammed Khayr Yasir; another Fezzani, the Seid Ahmed, from the village of Zouylah; and one named Khalyl, of Tripoli. In proceeding towards the well of Daum we lost our way in the desert, and fearing, if we moved on, that we should only lose time, we halted, made our camels kneel, and buried our water-skins, as deep as possible, beneath the baggage, to preserve them from the heat of the sun. Our caravan started, Ahmed took with him a certain number of his cousins, and searched through the desert to the right and to the left, seeking for the well which we ought by this time to have reached.

They remained a long time absent, and the day was far advanced when they returned. Their faces were grey with dust; but they brought joyful tidings, namely, that the well was near at hand. So we urged on our camels, and at last beheld the daum-trees in the distance. Every one began to cry out, "There they are! there they are! Those are the trees under which we are to rest this day!" We had scarcely uttered these words, when we beheld in front of us a troop of the Tibboos, called Turkman-Tibboos, and felt alarm. They rarely come to meet caravans, for they station towards Libya, divided into peoples of varying numbers, each with a Sultan, or king. The tribe that had met us had its principal station at a place called Marmar. They had known, for two or three months, by means of a traveller from Wadaï, that the master of our caravan was to be Ahmed, against whom they had a blood-feud; and it was for this reason that they waylaid us on our journey.

They stood right in our path, and sent forward a man on a camel, who galloped rapidly towards us, as swift as a horse. It is marvellous to see how skilfully these Tibboo tribes manage their dromedaries, or riding-camels. They train and exercise them like horses, to numerous delicate manœuvres, and have no other rein but the *zimâm*, or light cord, which by one end is tied to a hole pierced in the moving edge of the animal's nostril. Nearly all these marauding Tibboos are clothed in sheep-skins with

the wool on. He who advanced towards us had the litham over his face; that is to say, part of the stuff of his turban was wrapped three or four times round his head and visage, so that the eyes only were to be seen. When he was near to us he cried out, in his own language,—"Ho! people of the caravan, the Sultan is coming with his soldiers to the well. He forbids you to approach it. Know that you shall only do so when you have given up your guide to be killed, in expiation of the murder of one of our brothers. What are your intentions? Tell me, that I may inform the Sultan."

One of the Tibboos of our caravan translated what the messenger said, and we all decided at once that we would not deliver up Ahmed to his enemies, and that if the Tibboos asked only for a rope's end they should not have it. "Retrace thy steps," said we to the envoy, "and tell thy master that we have nothing to do with him—that we have no one to give up. Go!"

The messenger galloped swiftly away to report our answer, and the Sultan prepared to attack us. Then the Tibboos, who formed part of our caravan, separated from us, and, with the exception of Ahmed and his family, went off to some distance. Our party, counting Ahmed, only contained twenty-five individuals,* not counting the slaves, who were in

* I suppose he means "capable of bearing arms." He had not previously mentioned that there were any Tibboos with him, except the family of Ahmed.

great numbers. As we approached the well, the Tibboos advanced in a mass, all mounted two-and-two on about sixty or seventy camels. They rushed towards us, furiously casting their javelins. We, that is to say the five Arabs, waited for their approach, and fired a volley at them. Surprised, they turned back and fled like beaten wolves. We remained masters of the well, and encamped there. We drank, and allowed our camels to pasture on the wild herbage of the neighbourhood.

We thought that these savage Tibboos, whom we had so easily put to flight, had returned to their dwelling-places, and we rested at our well for two whole days; but, on the third, we suddenly heard loud cries and frightful imprecations. We sent to see what was the matter, and saw four camels resting near a body of armed people. Near them was our guide Ahmed, who stood amidst his people and the Wadaïans of our caravan. With the armed strangers was an old man, who seemed to be their chief. He had a piece of carpet tissue rolled round his head, four or six fingers in breadth, and about a cubit long. This old man was crouching down, like a dog or a hyæna, on his heels. The chief of the Wadaïans said to him,—

"Wherefore dost thou return? Thou hadst departed. What dost thou want? What dost thou expect?"

"Know," was the reply, "that I am the Sultan of these deserts; and that I have as many soldie

as you can count. What do I want? I come to advise you to deliver up Ahmed, if you wish to depart without blows or wounds. I know that you and I are not at war, but if you refuse my request there will be danger. That Ahmed slew my cousin, whom I loved as if he had been the son of my mother. It is my duty to avenge my cousin, and cleanse myself from the shame of leaving that murder unpunished."

"But," said the Wadaïan chief, "art thou not afraid of being killed as thy cousin was killed?"

"I have no fear. He who kills me will be killed in his turn. We never forget this duty—never abandon the vengeance of blood, though we should be hacked to pieces with a knife."

At these words of the obstinate old chief, Ahmed flew into a great rage, and insulted him, and was going to kill him. We restrained Ahmed; but, taking advantage of the agitation of all present, he slipped behind the Tibboos, and hamstrung the Sultan's camel. Then the Sultan said to him,—"This, too, thou shalt dearly pay for. My camel shall be avenged; and I will yet hamstring many of thy camels. As for you all, not a moment of repose shall you have. I shall be ever at your heels to torment you." These words now irritated the chief of the Wadaïans, who gave the old Sultan a heavy blow with his whip over the loins, and said,—"Be off, go to the devil, and do as thou pleasest! May Heaven confound thee, and he who begat thee!"

The Sultan got up without wincing, and marched off with his men, affecting an air of contempt, and stifling his anger.

The day passed away. We filled our skins; arranged our luggage; but next morning, just as we were about to load the beasts of burden and get ready to march, the cry was heard in the caravan: "Wait, wait; one of the Wadaïan camels has disappeared!" We paused; and presently afterwards louder cries arose. The caravan was in the greatest state of alarm; every one inquired what was the matter; and at last we learned that the Turkman-Tibboos had not only stolen a camel, but had seized one of our Wadaïans and slaughtered him. We divided at once into two parties, one of which hastened to the place where our companion had been slain, whilst the other remained to guard the slaves, the baggage, and the camels. We found the victim bathed in blood, and struggling in the convulsions of death. In the distance we saw a cloud of camels, each with two men on its back, their faces shrouded in black lithams. They looked like crows perched upon camels. They managed their beasts with wonderful cleverness, and horses are not more docile and eager in the field of battle.

One of these Tibboos came forward to our party and cried: "Whither are you going? what do you expect to do? For the camel of which you deprived us by ham-stringing yesterday we have taken a better one. The price of the lash with the whip is

the life of one of your best men—that one who lies killed there. But this is not all; you will surely repent; and if it were not for your guns we would ride down on you and cut you all to pieces."

We answered by firing on the troop in the distance; and they instantly fled, until they were like black spots on the horizon.

As for the Tibboos who originally formed part of our caravan, they remained thenceforward separate from us, marching alone. We were very much troubled and disquieted, fearing a sudden attack. We calculated all chances and raised the camp, marching away from the well; but the Tibboos accompanied us afar off, now and then making a false charge. They were present all the day long, now approaching, now flying, manœuvring all round, till the black night drew on. Then we halted, needing repose; but the furious Tibboos left us no peace. In spite of the darkness, one portion of these kept constantly disturbing us, whilst the other portion slept. Their object was to wear us out; and as we were few in numbers we could only get a very little rest. We knew that if any one of us were taken prisoner by the Tibboos he would instantly be killed. We dared not make reprisals, even if one of them had come amongst us; for we knew that this would exasperate them into a general attack. In their eyes, to kill a man is nothing. We resolved on a system of passive resistance, merely repelling their attacks. So we marched on for twenty days in this dreadful

state, ever in uncertainty and fear, until we came to the territories of another Sultan,—the country of the Tibboo-Reshad, or Tibboos of the Mountains. This is an arid region, covered with wells: the vegetation is meagre and rare.

But we were now, at length, free from disquietude, and could rejoice at being delivered from our enemies. It was midday when we entered the territory of the Tibboo-Reshad; but we continued our march, and towards evening halted. We now turned out our camels to graze, having no further fear of the rapacity of the Turkmans; but, as the sun was setting, we beheld approaching us whole swarms of the Tibboo-Reshad, who surrounded us like a cloud, though at a little distance. As each group arrived it alighted and encamped near the previous comers. We were watching this movement tranquilly, when we heard in the distance the sound of small tableh, or tambourines; upon which all the new-comers began crying: "Here comes the Sultan!" Presently a very common individual, with his wife behind him, came mounted on a camel. This was the only woman present. On reaching his people they saluted him, and helped his queen to dismount. Then they fixed up four stakes, and surrounded them with a melayeh; making a miserable little tent for their majesties. A Tibboo came forward and said pompously: "People of the caravan, come and do homage to the Sultan!" We went; and when we drew near

this caricature of royalty, we were ordered to sit down in three rows. An individual, dressed in a sheep-skin, announced himself a dragoman, and stood in front of us to convey the gracious commands of his sovereign. It appeared that he expected a good present; and told us that he wished to eat meat, which he had not done for a long time, and that he expected us to prepare a meal for the whole of his people. "Mind, be careful in the cookery," he added; "let all be good and soon ready." We answered that his commands should be complied with.

Whilst we were at work, the Sultan and his wife came out of their tent and drew near to us, so that I could examine them at my leisure. The Sultan was an old man,—decrepit, dry, lank, with thin beard, hollow cheeks, awkward gait, and dressed in a blue shirt, like that sometimes worn in Egypt. His countenance was wrapped in a black litham, so that he looked like a Copt in an ill-temper. In his left hand he carried a miserable lance with a broad head; and in his right a forked stick, used commonly by the Tibboos to drive their camels and push aside the branches of trees. As for the Sultana, she was a stunted old lady in a rumpled dress, and looked comically ugly. Both these potentates prowled through our tents without addressing a word of politeness to any one. When the supper was prepared, which was by nightfall, they and their troop

ate heartily, and expressed their satisfaction by ordering a similar repast to be got ready next day before the rising of the sun.

All this was not very pleasant; and we passed a short, uncomfortable night. We expected, after breakfast, however, to get away without further trouble; and, indeed, the strangers allowed us to depart and travel through the day. But at sunset the Sultan appeared again with his Tibboos, encamped near us, and claimed supper again. We began to fear that this famished Sultan would devour all our provisions. In the morning, having fed him once more, we proceeded over a rocky road, and by night reached a valley between three mountains, which we were told was the metropolis of that kingdom. Of course we had a banquet to prepare, not only for him and his escort, but for all his people. The hungry wretch, hearing that we had been attacked, had come to meet us, though, probably, with no other object than gormandising in this manner. There was no help. We had to feed the whole people during our stay, which we were obliged to prolong a little to take in a fresh provision of water.

The huts of the Tibboo-Reshad are set up at the foot of the mountains. The country appears sad and miserable, the only riches being some small flocks of sheep and goats, of which the owners drink the milk: it is their great luxury. The only trees are the seyal (*Mimosa seyal* of Forskall) and some

daums, the fruit of which is eaten by the Tibboos. When a caravan passes, and a camel dies of fatigue, these people seize the carcass and divide the flesh, preparing cadyd from it. The day of our departure, in the morning, just as we were about to start, I perceived that one of my slaves was missing. He had escaped during the night, taking with him two slave-girls, probably in order to sell them. We put off our journey a day; but I spent money uselessly in endeavouring to get back the fugitives. This, and other misfortunes, suggested to me the reflection, that when a man refuses the good that is offered him, he necessarily is forced to repent afterwards. When the idea of this unlucky journey presented itself to me, Sultan Saboun tried to dissuade me from it, advising me to remain in Wadaï until the return of my father; but I was obstinate, and suffered in consequence.

The first of my tribulations was the loss of an excellent ass, which I prized much. I used to ride it, and preferred it to a camel. Not very long after we set out there was a frightful plain of sand, which fatigued our beasts very much. I knew my ass carried me well, and we often got a good way ahead. So, encouraged by this, I sat down to rest, and allowed the whole troop to get a long way ahead of me, thinking it would be easy to catch it up. When I tried, however, having miscalculated, I found this not easy, and only succeeded in reaching the rear-guard with great trouble. Now it happened that

behind the camels were marching numerous female slaves, one of whom was of extraordinary beauty—a very pearl. My ass, which was very tired, ran up to her, and placed itself by her side, as if to ask the succour of her benevolence, showing her how fatigued it was. I wished to lure it away; it grew obstinate; I kicked it with my heels; it stumbled. The young girl and the other slaves began to laugh at my plight, and say,—"Take away thy ass; go far from us, and allow us to walk in peace." It was impossible for me to overcome the brute's obstinacy; so I got down and gave it a kick in the belly, whereupon it fell dead, as if I had struck it with a knife. I remained stupified for awhile; but soon took off its trappings, put them on my shoulders, and with great difficulty reaching one of my camels, mounted it.

But my mind remained full of the beauty of the slave-girl, and I began to inquire of what country she was, and who was her master. It was told me that she belonged to one of our Tibboos, named Tchay; and I at once went and proposed a bargain. "I will not sell my slave," said he, "except for four other slaves of the same age; that is, I shall not sell her at all. I intend her to be the governess of my house; I am not married; she shall be my wife." I insisted, however, and the Tibboo at length agreed to give her to me for the most beautiful of my women, with a young virgin slave and a stallion-camel. At nightfall, accordingly, he sent her to me, and I sent the camel and my two slaves. When,

however, I led my new acquisition to my tent, I perceived at once that it was not the one I had seen. This one appeared detestable to me. I was in great distress, and sent a man to the Tibboo to explain the mistake. But he answered that he had no slave but that one; that a bargain was a bargain; and that he meant to abide by what had been done. This embarrassed me; but after much praying and begging, and many messages, I obtained my two slaves back in exchange for his one; but he refused obstinately to give me back my camel. Then I began to seek for the girl who had so fascinated me, and soon learned that she belonged to another Tibboo, who loved her passionately, and who was loved by her in turn; and that not for her weight in gold would he part with her.

When we were about to start, once for all, from the Three Mountains, we received a message that we were expected, each of us, to give a measure of *dokhn* (millet) to his majesty the Sultan, and were obliged to comply. The grain was emptied out into a skin and carried away. We thought this was the last extortion; but the Sultan himself now appeared and began to ferret about our tents and baggage, appropriating whatever he took a fancy to, cords, baskets, &c., making presents to himself, and murmuring,—"I am the Sultan of this country, the master of this route; whoever refuses me anything shall not depart." No sooner was this visit satisfactorily concluded, than his mercenary queen came

to take her share of the spoils; and then the common Tibboos, each of whom pretended to be a king's son. Thus no apparent object of any value was left us. We came into the country rich, and we left it poor. For myself, I departed almost with tears in my eyes, thinking of the male slave who had escaped, and the girls he had taken with him.

We now entered on the desert, by which we were to approach Catroun, the first town on the borders of Fezzan. A hundred and fifty of the Tibboo-Reshad accompanied us a little in the rear. If we forgot a knife, or wooden cup—as caravans always do—they were ready to snap everything up; and if a camel fell, they were near to seize on the carcass. When one of our beasts of burden showed signs of knocking up, indeed, we had to comply with the customs of the desert—namely, to abandon our own beast, and hire a new one of the Tibboos. The old one is often kept by them, and fed and nourished into a useful animal again.

The Tibboos will not allow their hired camels to carry a single pound above the weight agreed at the outset. They are very careful of their beasts. The man whose camel I was obliged to hire walked in the morning in front of his beast, leading it by the bridle, plucking herbs as he went along, and feeding it; after midday he left the bridle, and went hither and thither collecting food to give it at halting time. In this way the camels of the Tibboos are always

kept in good health and strength, whilst those of the caravans become emaciated and worn out.

These people are very simple and ignorant. One of our people, named Abd-Allah, had a gold watch, which he used to hang by a branch of a tree when he rested in the shade. At the last station in the Tibboo country fatality decreed that he should leave it suspended. The savages came as usual to search about, and saw what they imagined to be a lump of precious metal swinging from a branch. One of them seized it with joy; but suddenly heard a noise and put it near his ear. Immediately he imagined that there was a devil inside, and dashing it against the branch of a tree, took to flight with his companions into the desert. When Abd-Allah came back, therefore, to look for his watch, he found only the fragments. Cursing the time he had stayed there, he pursued his journey until the evening, and then inquired among the Tibboos who had done this thing. One came forward and boasted that he had dashed the devil to pieces; so Abd-Allah made a note of him, and on arriving at Mourzouk cited him before the Kadi, and compelled him to pay damages to the extent of forty dollars.

The Tibboos are the most ceremonious people in the world. When they meet, they squat down one opposite the other, looking serious and calm, well wrapped up in their lithams, with a lance in one hand and a buckler in the other. They then growl

out an interminable series of compliments, after which they talk of business, and often end with a regular fight. If, for example, one of them alludes, by way of reproach, to any loss he has sustained from the others, blows are sure to follow. They are the most avaricious of men, and will strip a whole caravan for a bit of leather.

We were ten days in crossing the desert that separated us from Fezzan. It is without water. We travelled several hours after night and before morning, in order to avoid the torment of heat and thirst. We hastened on as rapidly as possible. On our last night's march most of the travellers had no water left, and some had only a very small quantity. I had still four skins left, and I had had the good idea of enclosing two of my skins in the *guerfehs*, or large leather bags, to prevent evaporation by the sun; the other two were fastened to my camel. During the last night we marched hard until worn out with fatigue, and then halting, each slept where he could. Before closing my eyes I gave drink to such of my slaves as were thirsty; and then laid my head between my two skins. Near me lay Abd-Allah with his slaves, who drank all my water in the night, and I complained in the morning without obtaining redress.

My favourite slave was then one of the girls whom I had given with a camel to a Tibboo, as above mentioned, when I was bewildered with desire for another. About this time the poor thing was seized

with what is called "the thirst of the desert," or shôb. She had an unappeasable craving for drink; but the more water she drank the more she wanted. I feared for her life; but a Bedawin, named Khalyl, who was one of the caravan, perceiving my distress, said to me: "Give her some melted butter to drink, and her sufferings will cease." I followed his advice, and in a very short time she was relieved. Then I placed her on a camel, for slaves usually walk, and the heat somewhat diminishing, she was quite cured. I afterwards learned that a caravan on its way to Mekka, having wandered from the right road, and having not a drop of water left, continued to exist entirely on a little melted butter for ten whole days. This is more extraordinary than what happened to my slave.

When we reached the well we halted for forty-eight hours, after which we proceeded until we reached Catroun.* This place is surrounded with palms, producing excellent dates, which the people eat in abundance at every repast. They likewise feed cattle and horses with them. Their territory is sandy and sterile. They are as black as the Soudanees; and consist of Tibboos who have settled there, with a small mixture of Fezzanees.

* I have given the Sheikh's account of the incidents of this journey in some detail—although his geographical information is wonderfully meagre—because I think it is the only record we have of personal observation in that desert. What he says of the manners of the Tibboos agrees well with other accounts.

CHAPTER XI.

Mourzouk—A beggarly Court—An Ulemah—A miserable Country—Why the City flourishes—A Man of Good Faith—The Beni Seyf and the Bischr—Departure for Tripoli—A grave Assembly—Agreeable Conversation—Arrival at Gharian—Infidel Bedawins—Tripoli—Journey to Tunis—Sheikh arrives at his Father's House—Paternal Honesty—Omar sets out again for Wadaï—The Sheikh's Marriage—Death of his Father—Other Journeys—He goes to Egypt—Conclusion.

Having remained three days at Catroun, we went in four more to Mourzouk, usually called Zeylah. At the gates our slaves were counted and registered by the officers of the customs, as if we had been entering a great city. But Mourzouk is a wretched borough, inhabited by blacks from Afnou, and a heterogeneous population of Arabs from Tripoli, Jalou, Aujila, and Derna. It is situated in a plain, far from any other town or village. The bazaar is miserably small, containing only fourteen shops. A market is held every afternoon for about an hour and a half; and goods are then sold by a crier, who goes up and down, announcing the prices offered.

We were presented to the Sultan, as he calls

himself, although he is in reality a mere governor. He was the well-known Mountaser, who afterwards rebelled against the Pasha of Tripoli. He received us with much haughtiness, and with an attempt at state. I never saw such an enormous white turban as the one he wore. It was folded in the Mekka fashion,—that is, swelling more over the right temple than the left,—but the size was so ridiculously exaggerated, that his Majesty dared scarcely bend his head. I could not help laughing to myself at his airs of importance. He deigned to receive our presents, but addressed us not except by slight signs. Decorum in Fezzan consists in restraining the prodigality of ceremonies. The court of this mighty Sultan consisted of a number of fellows wrapped in old, worn-out blankets. They looked very wretched. I afterwards went to the Vizier Othman's, and found him surrounded by a lot of dirty people playing on old tambourines and cracked flutes. Everything in this country is miserable. I could find no food to eat with pleasure, and spent three months there very wretchedly.*

Few strangers from the Magreb, or any other country, who are at all accustomed to easy living, can make up their minds to settle at Mourzouk. They say that a learned man, an Ulema, once

* The Sheikh is prejudiced against Fezzan, which, however, is not a very delightful oasis. Besides, he was impatient to reach his own country; and nothing appears so disagreeable as the vestibule of a house you are anxious to enter, if you are kept long waiting.

came to teach at that city. He was immediately surrounded by disciples; the crowd came to his lessons; he was listened to with avidity — which is the supreme happiness of men of science: yet, in spite of this, one morning the worthy Ulema ran away from the place in a great hurry. He could not put up with it any longer. "It is impossible to stand it," said he. "Wherefore?" inquired some one. — "Wherefore? Why, because it is the veritable image of hell. Hell is hot, — so is Mourzouk: the damned are black, — so are the people of Mourzouk: hell has seven gates, — so has Mourzouk. What the deuce do you expect one to do in a place which completely answers the definition of hell?" So away he went as fast as he could.

Verily, it is an abominable country. Women sell themselves for a handful of barley, — at least so they say. Besides, there is not a dish which can be eaten with pleasure; there never falls a drop of rain; man and beasts live on the same food — dates: there is the abiding-place of fever, nourished by continual feeding on dates and barley-bread. Wheat is so rare that only the great people and the Sultan can indulge in it: butter is as difficult to be got as red sulphur. What can one do with the grease which is sold at Mourzouk for kitchen-stuff? What *can* one do in a country where men eat clover, with a little salt, as a delicacy, where a fowl costs half a mitkal of gold, and ten eggs are charged half a riyal? I have seen servants come before the

Women's Kadi to complain that they had not enough to eat, — even of dates. In one word, merchants only have any cause to be pleased with Mourzouk; for they gain sometimes a thousand per cent there.

It is by the passage of the caravans that the city subsists. All those that come from Bornou, from Wadaï, from Bagirmeh, and, indeed, both Western and Eastern Soudan, meet here. Merchants of Aujila ply between Egypt and Mourzouk; and those of Sokneh and Bengazi between Tripoli and Mourzouk, which has become a veritable central mart of commerce. The slaves preferred there are those of Haussa, the capital of Afnou; and, indeed, in all markets they fetch the highest prices. The Tuaricks and the Tuatee come for the purposes of trade to Mourzouk, where also pass the pilgrim caravans from all the West.

The people of Fezzan are remarkable for benevolence and probity, as an example will prove. A Fezzanee had dissipated his moderate fortune in extravagance, and was reduced to misery. Some days before the departure of a caravan for Soudan, accordingly, he went and cut a number of palm-leaves, and, taking the stems, wrapped them up carefully in thick cloth, making them appear like bales of merchandise. Then he placed them on a camel, and taking them into the city, paid a couple of douros on each as a tax; for it is the custom to make a fixed charge, and not to search. Having got

his two bales safe in his house, the Fezzanee went to the Vizier Othman, and said,—"To-morrow a caravan departs for Soudan. I have just received two bales of merchandise, which I cannot take with me; I will leave them with thee as a pledge, if thou wilt lend me two hundred dollars for the speculation I am going to undertake. When I return I will pay." "Willingly," said the vizier, trusting in his good faith. The bales were brought, the money was counted out, and the man departed. In six months he returned, having been fortunate, and went to the vizier, confessed his trick, paid back the money, and the two were ever afterwards friends. The Prophet has said,—"Good faith is the ark of salvation."

I was detained long at Mourzouk, as I have said, and became weary and disgusted. The roads were infested by the tribe of Bedawins called the Beni Seyf-en-Nasr, who robbed and murdered travellers, so that even caravans dared not depart.* At length, however, I obtained an opportunity of departure under the conduct of one Bou-Bekr, a chief of the tribe of the Bischr. This tribe had formerly been defeated by the Beni Seyf, and forced to take refuge in Fezzan, where they settled, leaving their rivals in possession of the surrounding desert. Yusef Pasha, of Tripoli,

* This tribe was subsequently driven into the Saharah, and forced to retreat as far as the borders of Soudan, where its turbulent and marauding disposition engaged it in constant quarrels with its black neighbours. It was nearly exterminated in 1851.

however, hearing of this, and wishing to employ them to reduce the Beni Seyf, had sent for their chief men to have an interview. It was with this deputation that I obtained permission to depart. Bou-Bekr told me to meet him at Shiatee, and giving me a guide, I departed with my camels, and in five days reached the place of rendezvous. Here I was well received by Bischr, the chief of the tribe, and treated in all respects as if I was one of them. So I waited patiently until the arrival of Bou-Bekr, rejoiced at having escaped from Mourzouk, feeding on milk and meat, and seeing with pleasure my camels pasturing on the excellent herbage which grows in the Wady of Shiatee.

On the arrival of Bou-Bekr the tribe collected in a general council to deliberate. Every one, old and young, came to discuss the general situation. I shall always remember the impression which this assembly produced upon me, and the freedom with which all the members expressed their opinions. Young people, children of from twelve to fifteen years of age, equally with the reverend people of the tribe, had a deliberative voice, and were listened to without excitement or indifference. No one held back from giving an opinion, and all opinions were duly weighed and considered. It was really a marvellous thing to see old men listening to, and weighing the words of, unbearded youths and mere children. The sight of no assembly ever moved me more. Such things are not seen, I believe, in any other

country. An assembly so calm, so attentive, so grave, representing all ages, gathered together to discuss a question of general interest to all ranks, is a model to be imitated by the peoples of the earth. I know not how behave the deliberative councils of France and England, but I am persuaded that both French and English might go and take a lesson of gravity and freedom, an example for the forms of public discussion, in the deserts of Africa, among the children of the tribes of Bischr. There are savages who have some good in them; there is wisdom even among louts; there are simpletons who can teach the wise; just as in the desert there are some oases, some spots of greenery.

It was decided that some of the principal men of the tribe should go to Tripoli with Bou-Bekr, whilst the others remained at Shiatee. The preparations that were necessary—such as collecting provisions, getting together water-skins, and so forth—lasted five days. On the sixth we departed, with an escort of twenty Arabs, and entered upon vast plains beyond the limits of Fezzan. The Bischr who accompanied us talked much, but had no topics but their own incursions, battles, and robberies. "Do you remember," would they say one to the other, "how on such a day we made such an expedition—how we were attacked by such a tribe—how I killed such an one?—the whole tribe saw me give that famous blow!" This was the matter of conversation among these Bedawins during the entire

journey. We advanced for fifteen days over plains dotted with trees and covered with verdure. The Arabs constantly sent out scouts to watch the horizon and look sharp for ambuscades wherever the ground seemed to favour an attack. On the sixteenth day we reached the district of Gharian, which is well wooded and adorned with gardens, picturesque and wild places, springs of water and large ponds: saffron grows here, and fruits of various kinds. The people are good and hospitable. They lodge under ground; so that on approaching their villages only the minarets of the mosques are to be seen, and the houses set apart for strangers. We were well received, and generally halted at night near a village. All I had to complain of was the food. Their great dish is a thick paste soaked in oil, and seasoned with date-marmalade. I could never eat more than a couple of mouthfuls. We were five days in traversing this district, where we were in perfect safety, having nothing to fear but God.

I must say, however, that I was displeased with the Bischr, my companions, on account of their total indifference in matters of faith and law. They never pray; nothing is reprehensible or forbidden among them; crime and virtue are all one. They swear only by the oath of divorce. They continually boast of the number of enemies they have killed, of people they have robbed; and seem to think that time is lost which is not devoted to these occupations. I used to say to them, "Such works and

such a life are criminal, forbidden by God. Give up such habits; be corrected." They would answer: "We are men of forbidden things; we live in them and by them. God has created us Bedawins of the desert, that we may do them." I quoted the Koran and the maxims of the Prophet, at which they laughed and treated me as a fool. One of them, named Katar, said, that if I had not been under the protection of Bou-Bekr, he would long ago have seized my camels and my slaves. In fact, these tribes regard nothing as sacred: if there are any pious men among them they are very aged and decrepit. All their Islamism consists in repeating the Profession of Faith.*

Leaving Gharian, we proceeded towards Tripoli, when the first thing we saw was a man hanging over the gateway. I did not long remain there. It is a city not nearly so great as its reputation. There are two gates, one towards the market-place; the other towards the sea. The houses remind me of those of Alexandria, before it was embellished by Mohammed Ali. All the merchants nearly are natives of the island of Jirbeh. At Tripoli I sold all my slaves, except one from Bagirmeh, named Zeitoun, whom I loved. Then I set out by sea for

* The Sheikh seems to have understood pretty well the character of the Bedawins, who are, in fact, a set of coarse barbarians, with some few fine qualities, which sound very well when spoken of in poetry or romance, apart from the vulgar and repulsive realities of their ordinary existence.

Tunis, and having visited Safakes, at length arrived in sight of my native place. We recognised it by its dazzling whiteness, by the glittering panes of its houses, by its eaves of shining tin, by its cupolas covered with semi-cylindrical tiles, and varnished green.

We went to the okella (hotel) of travellers from Safakes. I hired two asses, and placing on them my kitchen-utensils and bedding, mounted one myself, and placed my slave on the other. Then we penetrated into the interior of the town, asking for my father's house. I found that he had gone to a country dwelling, and proceeding thither, found at length my father walking in the garden. He had a dozen concubines, five fellow-servants, and the black servant; and he had given a young slave to his mother.

I was received with distinction and apparent joy. My two cousins, young girls, came to salute me, and so did my sister and my grandmother. I related my adventures, but said nothing of the money which was in my belt, and begged my slave to keep the secret.

Towards evening my father caused a bath to be prepared, and told me to wash myself from the dust of travel. Unsuspecting, I complied; and the attendant, when I was undressed, took up my old garments and carried them away, leaving in their place a new Tunisian dress. It happened that my father took up my girdle, and finding it heavy,

knew that it contained money. He accordingly appropriated the whole. I dared not at first remonstrate, but did so at length through the medium of a friend. My father was very angry, and said that whatever I had belonged to him; that he had supplied the capital, and was the cause of the favour of the Sultan of Wadaï; and that if I ever alluded to the subject again I should be turned out of doors. So I was reduced to silence.

Some time afterwards, however, my father, feeling the roving disposition come over him again, called to me, and said: "I wish to undertake a second journey to Wadaï, and bring back my children with the rest of my family, and arrange all my affairs. Remain, then, at the sanieh. I give it to you, with the land adjoining, in exchange for the money I have had of yours. Watch over this little domain and cultivate it. I leave for that purpose oxen and tools. In the warehouse is abundance of barley for cattle, and of wheat for seed. I leave to your care my mother and your cousins." I requested my father not to undertake such a journey, and offered to go in his place, but he would not listen to my advice; and having made his preparations, started with many presents for the Sultan of Wadaï.

I settled at the sanieh without money, but with my grandmother and cousins to support. I cultivated the ground; and when I was in want sold a portion of my store of barley. Soon after my father's departure, my grandmother advised me to

marry the younger of my cousins, and I at length consented. Two years passed, and I received news of my father's death from Tripoli. I repaired there, and met Sedan, my father's slave. He told me that he had been sent to Mourzouk to sell slaves, and had realised nine hundred and sixty dollars; but that Moknee, who was then governor of Fezzan, had taken them from him. This determined me to return across the desert. I reached Mourzouk in safety, and with some difficulty got back my money. Then I started for Wadaï again; but on the borders of the country of the Tibboo-Reshad I met a large caravan, with which was my Uncle Zarouk. I found that he had appropriated my father's property; and it was only after a violent quarrel that I got back a portion—namely, a number of slaves.

I returned to Tunis with my slaves, and soon afterwards disposed of my sanieh, which I found to be a losing concern. Then I went to live in Tunis itself, and passed there two years, during which I spent a great part of my fortune. Fearing poverty, I determined to undertake the pilgrimage to Mekka, and carry merchandise with me. My wife refused to accompany me; so I started alone, on board a brig, which touched first at Susa. Whilst we stayed here I made a little excursion to Cairawan. Eleven days afterwards we sighted Alexandria. From this place I went to Cairo, where I was rejoiced to find my mother alive and well. I gave her a hundred piastres for her expenses. Seven days after my arrival

I bought an Abyssinian slave, a beautiful girl, gentle and honest. Her heart was good and loving, and she shared my joys and sorrows. I kept her for six years, until she died (A.D. 1821) of the plague. No loss ever grieved me more than the loss of my beautiful Abyssinian girl, whom may God regard with mercy!

CONCLUDING NOTE.

The Sheikh now reverts to his last voyage to Fezzan, and gives further details. After this he promises to write what befell him during his pilgrimage to Mekka, and in a visit he subsequently made to the Morea; but this portion of his work he has not yet executed. I have thought it best to give but a mere outline of the concluding section of his travels. What I have presented will impart some idea of the kind of life led by these Oriental wandering merchants, and enable us to understand the working of the Mohammedan social system, and especially of polygamy. The reader will not have failed to perceive that the intercourse of the sexes becomes almost fortuitous; that filial and parental affection are necessarily weakened and nearly destroyed; and that natural sentiments, though they show themselves now and then, do so in a merely episodical

and unimportant way. The great bane of Muslim civilisation is this idea, that women are an article of property. The worthy Sheikh, who so regrets his Abyssinian girl, forgets to tell us what became of Zeitoun. He had loved another slave also, but had endeavoured to change her away to satisfy a momentary caprice. These reflections, however, will have suggested themselves to the sagacious reader.

THE END.

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